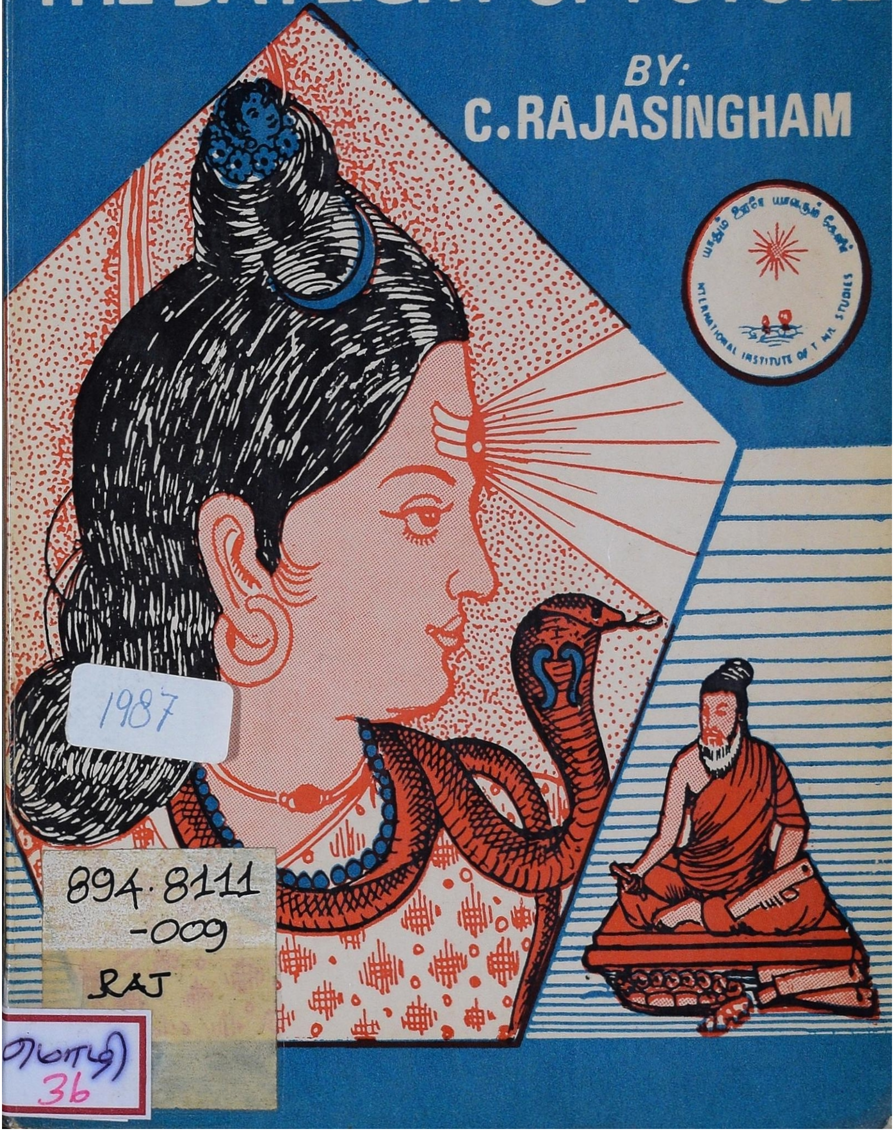
THIRUK-KURAL

THE DAYLIGHT OF PSYCHE

BY:
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" A man is only qualified to translate an ancient text when he has really participated in and not merely observed, the outer and inner life of its time, and identified this time with his. own. All this evidently requires a far longer, more round about, and self-denying discipline than is commonly associated with the study of the history of art, which generally penetrates no farther than an analysis of styles. and certainly not to an analysis of the necessary reasons of iconographies or logic of composition. "

(Ananda Coomaraswamy - **" Is Art a Superatition ? "** Page - 75).

CONTENTS

PREFACE

This work comprises a project I had in mind for quite some time and which has now been approved by the International Institute of Tamil Studies. Dr. A. N. Perumal, the Director, needs my thanks for his concurrence that the Kural which has seen the light of many translations and interpretations, both from Indian and Western scholars, should now be rescued from the moralistic and platitudinous approaches of the past.

My work in this undertaking will therefore apply the proper and, in my view, the only perspective to its understanding as the Tamil people's most valuable and sociologically most significant work intended to reach thit world through the medium of the psyche without neglecs of the necessary functions of the body.

This undertaking also meets a long-felt need which is to bring this most valuable and significant work of Thiruvalluvar within the focus of :

(a) modern sociological thinking culminating in Marxism.

(b) enlarging the scope and application of (a) so that the understanding is broadened to embrace the larger and more more comprehensive norm called **aram**.

(c) the proper field of psychology so that the totally erroneous translations of certain chapters undertaken so far by Western and Indian scholars are corrected without delay.

The time has come, I feel, when the realities of the psychic life as understood in modern psychology have to

be applied to any proper understanding of **kural**-more especially of the first few chapters-so that this unique inheritance in Tamil can become the needed and only thing to overthrow the existing order and bring about renewal.

In the Tamil consciousness - (if we have to trace its growth down to the most ancient Sangam period)-the ego is suppressed in the acknowledgement of the primacy of the Self. The world becomes both **aham** (within) and **puram** (without). This categorisation into 'inner' and 'outer' and the logical pursuance of their contraopposed positions created a day-light of objectified realities all the time and in all that went as Dravidian culture. In Dravidian art, where the permanent is seen in the temple while the ever-present, yet transcendent, is intended to be found at the very threshold of the home, namely the **kolam**, there is acceptance of the invitation within the home of charity and love. David Dean Shulman looks at it from yet another angle which is not borne out by Valluvar in his **Kural**. Shulman says, "Space and consciousness intersect at the threshold of divinity. This is the shared dimension of experience never lacking in South India; the beyond keeps breaking in upon the present; it can never be ignored." (Page 5 "The **King** and **Clown** in South Indian Myth and Poetry"). The state of household life was fulfilment in love and charity and Valluvar deals with it with great emphasis and clarity as the centre and focus of the whole Tamil tradition.

In the **Kural** was envisaged perfectitude for the social order. In it there is no death for the soul of man but death only for the empirical, greedy and selfish. Valluvar worked to draw the balance-sheet of human life and thus made death both the end of the empirical man and the goal of him redeemed from the dualites (இருவினை).

The **Kural** was the work of a master-craftsman with no concern for anything but the human and divine as

co-existent and inseparable. What is happening today is the complete segregation of mind and spirit so that each individually can subserve the demands of the ego. There is no co-inherence of mind and spirit which in the past enabled, for instance, the Red Indian to live within the constraints imposed by the natural eco-system. It is relevant here to quote Chief Seattle of the Duwamish tribe of Washington State. What he said, bitterly no doubt, in 1855 is still relevant even to the Tamil situation afflicted as it is today by the Western blight. It was in a letter written to President Franklin Pierce protesting vehemently against the white man's purchase of his tribe's lands :

" Every part of the earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience on my people."

"The white man......... is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother but his enemy, and his children's birthright is forgotten..., All things share the same breath- the beasts. the trees, the man. The white man does not seem to notice the air he breathes."

"What is man without the beast? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from great loneliness of spirit, for whatever happens to the beast also happens to man......... All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth also befalls the sons of the earth........."

"When the buffaloes are all slaughtered, the wild horses all tamed, the secret corners of the forest all heavy with the scent of men, and the view of the ripe hills blotted by talking wives, where is the thicket? Gone. Where is the eagle ? Gone. And what is it to say goodbye to the swift pony and the hunt, the end of living and the beginning of survival?"

We are today confronted with destruction not merely of the species, but even more of the eco-system. We are no longer worthy in the sense that Wordsworth expressed : "The calm existence that is mine when I am worthy of myself." ("The Prelude").

The more we move 'upwords' in terms of 'civilized' progress, the more is our 'progress' towards a meaningless existence. What we call 'free will' becomes a cramp of the will because we are unable to push forward into the transcendental territory which is also ours. In our concept of the atom we no doubt have begun an effort but, where Tamil belongs, which is the ultra - violet end of the psychic spectrum, we have completely removed ourselves away from that transcendental background.

Kural represents the authentic element which should not be identified with any intellect - pointed servitude. It speaks all the time of divinity which we should take as analogous to the condition called **"Katpu"** (கற்பு), namely **the constancy of the idea of the self.** It is a divine disposition which man carries expressed beautifully in **Kalithohai 9** :

இறந்த கற்பினாட்கு எவ்வம் படரன்மின்
சிறந்தானை வழிபடீஇச் சென்றனள்
அறம் தலைபிரியா ஆறும் மற்று அதுவே

The sages or **anthanar** in this poem whose path is that of **aram** (குறிப்பு ஏவல் செயல் மாலைக் கொளை நடை அந்தணிர்) give this advice to the grief-stricken mother whose daughter had gone the way of **kalavu** (secret and abiding love) :

"Grieve not for her sake !
She is constant to her true love
And hath chosen for herself
One worthy indeed to follow!
Verily, therefore is she gone
The path of **aram** to tread."

~~The more we move 'upwards' in terms of 'civilized'~~

In this state of **Katpu** which can only grow out of **kalavu** there was singleness of meaning and purpose. Hence Valluvar assigns houshold duties to **Katpu** which is only after the self-identification found in **kalavu** has been realised. Here in the household state, life becomes an energic process where knowledge was needed of the universal archetypal background. Life expressed fullness because the Tamil man's world did not lose sight of archetypal statements. As we proceed to read and interpret Kural we are moved to an understanding that the divine overpowers the human and that the unconscious has no concern with the ego. Valluvar takes human life into a world of substance as well as of image pointing to something ineffable.

The **Kural** becomes at once the entire body of unwritten law coming under **aram**. It was kingly justice entirely divine which marked the Tamil people's social behaviour. The **Kural** laid the proper norms of such justice which never countenanced any reversal as happened to the Pandyan who wrongly condemned Kovalan in a subsequent age. The king here himself becomes the 'thief' and is proclaimed "the one with the collapsing parasol and sagging staff" (தாழ்ந்த குடையன் தளர்ந்த செங்கோலன் (வழக்குரை காதை). The justice of the king to the Tamil tradition represented something synonymous with the sun - a consciousness likened to the daylight of the psyche.

Tnat Kural has become relevant and meaningful today is due also to the revulsion taking place of some sort to the the modern world's aberrations which means a turning away from outward material things to discover what exists in the psyche beyond consciousness.

That means the sickness arising out of enslavement to the products of science and industry must call for a cure which can only be found in a central peace which subsists at the heart of endless agitation.

This translation and interpretation of **Kural** is designed to place this masterpiece of Tamil sociology in its proper setting and thus to rescue it from all the profanities of past interpreters-both Western and Christian - orientated. The social order in **Kural** was the only reality meaningfully conveyed for the Tamil life because it carried with it a vast body of disciplined education and behaviour. If that education system had continued there would not have arisen the present serious rupture. In that education alone was available the proper integrated and disciplined outlook which even today is capable of transcending the social values called the 'modern'.

An introductory chapter became necessary so that, in the present world of concious and even revolutionary change, the meaning of social living should not be emptied of content and fulfilment. This introduction will therefore make **Kural** a living and substantive code of human conduct and behaviour which in turn can give life its meaning and fulfilment. In the present too humanity can hope for something no less than in the future since man's life is essenttally in spirit and truth is nothing if it cannot live. It is only in the path of **Kural** that man can strive after the highest things.

Valluvar presented in Kural all that went as the meaningful in the Tamil people's life where divinity and social consciousness became intermingled. Long thereafter, even during a period of decline, Ilango - adigal showed what was meant by retributive justice in **Aram**-அல்லவை செய்தார்க்கு அறங் கூற்றம். As the Central Archetype of wholeness aram becomes the supreme psychic authority controlling the ego. Valluvar in his own right became the sole authoritative interpreter of what was truly the Tamil life in tradition giving no room for ambivalence. Whatever polarity there is in his expositions is outside the conscious mind which is where the energy comes from. The Kural is thus the day - star rising out of the nocturnal sea.

Arnold Toynbee said very rightly that the present clamour for *literacy is the sacrifice of deep - level consci*ousness. He observed that "consciousness receives intuition from the sub-conscious. Both reason and sense perception are uncreative. The creative activity of the human psyche is intuitional, and the sub - conscious is its source" * What he said is applicable to the present situation of the Tamils too : "Among peoples that have become literate, the faculty of memory has been weakened, and perhap literacy, in its turn, is going to suffer from the use of radio and television as means of communication". ("**Choose Life's** A dialogue - Arnold Toynbee and Daisaku Ikeda - Oxford University Press.(Page32).

The crazy pursuit of science as an end in itself - (science itself being a tiny fraction of what the Universe conveys) - has made the present Tamil mind ambivalent. The result is that **Kural** is being accepted only as ethical where the intent and purpose is never to subjugate the self-centredness which is all that modern life implies. The entirety of modern thinking leads to wasteful private consumption by whole populations with no effort made to restrain greed. Toynbee sees no future for the modern man except through "a revolutionary change of heart in individual human beings."

The Tamil mind today is ambivalent and perverse to change as can be seen in one reason, namely that **Kural** has been dismissed as a collection of maxims. Any revolutionary change can only come through connecting **Kural** with the traditional science of living with fulfilment in the house hold state. Valluvar attested to a way of life truly lived in tradition - the household in the sense of இல்.

The household in Tamil tradition did not belong to the lower reaches of the ego but, as the divine empyrean,

it reflected the **daylight of the psyche.** It gave proof ithat supreme values only reside in the soul by which it followed that to possess and cherish the soul is the whole venture of life.

Valluvar devotes considerable attention, therefore, to the household state bringing out in every forcible way possible those which were its attributes and imperatives. It reflected deep surrender and complete effacement of self-interest.

The household had social, economic and religious functions derived entirely from the psychic non-ego. There was one pleasure which was that of giving to whosoever called what was essential to him for life and fulfilment. The collective element was so uppermost that there was no craving for individualistic supremacy. Thus everything became holy unlike today where all things have lost their mystery and luminosity.

The corpus of 90 **Kurals** dealt with in this book is treated as one conscious whole designed to a collective state of understanding and realisation of man's destiny and fulfilment. It calls therefore for action in surrender of greed which today in the world has taken a mad course. The scientific and technological have undoubtedly given free rein to human greed. It is greed which is behind the conquest of Nature too which in turn has contributed to environmental pollution. There is today not merely conspicuous geeed but also conspicuous consumption. The natural rhythm which is there all the time in life has to a great extent been destroyed by scientific technology.

This book will have served a purpose if it has helped the revolutionary role of **Kural** even today. There is a call in **Kural** all the time for growth of the psychic consciousness which is the only way to arrest the mass degeneration of personality, if not the dehumanization trends

in the present Tamil social order. Toynbee no doubt sees around the world - "the world's growing population silting in the cities" and, in the shrinking rural areas, "the life of the remnant being urbanized".

Valluvar thus becomes even more meaningful and relevant today in the sense that his language and diction carry meaning in a more direct way to the Tamil people. If economic production is the sustenance behind **aram** and its single end in self - surrender, the need at once becomes compulsive for radical change in the present social order. Valluvar showed the way of change in the most redical way but whether it has to be painful is essentially the challenge of the present. Still change has to come in a radical way - from lovelessness to love, from greed to **aram**. Since our evils are man - made, the cure for these have to come from us alone. It is evident that out greatest battle will have to be against self - centredness which means therefore that our homes have to become இல் in the sense understood in **Kural**.

Tamil tradition knew only one way which was that of discipline and fulfilment and to that end it was directed through disciplined inner urges born out of the imperatives of a highly - disciplined education. Schools therefore came to occupy the very threshold of homes called **puram - thinnais** and pointed to in the most artistic way by **kolams**. The spirit of man ruled and the body became servant. It was different from what it is today where all raw material, even for the scientific, is derived from data drawn only from sense perception. The products of science are fodder for the ego but not so with Tamil education which was directed from the conscious level of the psyche. The antiqity implied in Tamil gave birth to the knowledge that reason and sense perception are uncreative.

Tamil poetry, literature and art have a compelling power because they have in them a high charge of psychic energy. There was daylight in it because the awakening was to consciousness. Where modern science signals the actual end in destruction for mankind, Tamil learning, as part of the memory process, paved the radiant way for psychic function. It was an energic pursuit giving daylight because the awakening was to consciousness. Where modern science signals the actual end in destruction of the species, Tamil learning, as part of the memory process, became both significant and enriching. Whilst creating harmony in the living environment, it enriched all that belonged to man as part of the divine element in Nature. There was no conquest in it of the natural world and no exploitation of the resources of Nature to serve greed and appetite.

We have today reached the fag - end of 'growth' in scientific terms so that thinkers of the modern age such as Arnold Toynbee have called for concerted action "to save mankind from the consequences of technology inspired by greed" and "to cure pollution by cutting away its root, which is greed."

There is no sanctity whatsoever in modern man's life alienated as it is from Nature. That is because his habitat at and the whole of it has been unified at the technological level only. Valluvar presents for us a different picture because the unification, he knew, was only real and possible through love and self - surrender.

The ego ceases to exist in the world presented to us by Kural. Also the world is transformed as meaningful and purposive when once the numinosity in the psychic life is seen as the only thing capable of formulating destiny. Thus the life prescribed for man in **Kural** is luminous because it is purposive in the struggle to liberate which is all that the earth is designed for. In the words of Jung

the totality of the concious mind is like that of a smaller circle within a larger one. It is to become what man really is - namely in the naturally development of personality where, to speak of individualism is a cheap insult'- "Real increase of personality means consciousness of an enlargement that flows from inner sources. Without psychic depth we can never be adequately related in the magnitude of our object." †Kural chalks an unalterable way applicable even more to contemporary situations.

Modern technological and scientific 'progress' has only multiplied greed. The more the progress in technology, the more the tables have been turned against the natural man and the environment. Pride has increased in proportion to the power given to indulge in greed. Science and technology heve closed the eye of gnosis whilst presenting material enrichment out of a world whose natural environment has suffered grave pollution.

The challenge of being human has caused great suffering and even privation all round. Kural meets this challenge by turning man into a revolutionary element for mastery of himself. Also it provides a chart of the universe through man-directed strength in the spirit only. The ancient Dravidian tradition knew sufficiently that it is the spirit alone that can unify.

The age of rivalry extending even to space travel has to yield to the age of fulfilment and self-realisation. Where the former calls for the nightmare of hostile coalitions' in the nightmare of hostile coalitions' in the words of Bismark, the latter is stressed as the only way understood in the Tamil tradition. In the truths here proclaimed by Valluvar are understood that the human entity has a goal here on earth which is that of fulfilment as well as an existence outside the space-time dimension.

† (Jung : Collected Works 9, Part I, Page 215)

Kural proceeds along a logical course from the Still Point of the psychic consciousness in the first chapter to others pointing, though distantly, to that Still Point. Thus to Valluvar Siva, the Cosmic Dancer, becomes the overwhelming psychic factor which means that man is nothing but his consciousness. God, thus becoming the highest point that the psyche can reach, is a specifically relevant and meaningful entity enabling the establishment of a life of fullness and rich experience. And that life was reflected in that of householder. Theஇல் was built on a sound foundotion unlike the ruinous things homes have become today. T. S. Eliot was thus putting the situation rightly :

"But, have you built well, that you sit helpless in a ruinous house ?

Where many are born to idleness, to frittered lives and squalid deaths,

embittered scorn in honeyless hives."

("**Choruses from the 'The Rock'**)

The Kural gives meaning to the day-light of the psyche which lit up every Tamil household. Hence there was no suppression or rejection of humanity. Between man and man as well as between man and nature there was no division through lovelessness and environmental pollution. Neither was there social sickness cure all the time.

Man, as part of the life force underlying all things, became related to a cosmic life force which extended equality and love in all directions. There was a glamour in the life of householder - a radiating power which gave strength to the whole social order.

Kural is being dealt with here to emphasise the doctrinal element which alone can bring to focus the ultimate spiritual reality behind and beyond the universe. This is

turn, it is hoped, will arrest the present Tamil people at least from becoming senile before actual physical death. This translation and commentary is an endeavour to prevent the soul of Tamil being eclipsed by thoughtless translations and interpretations.

Valluvar is the Tamil man's soul in the art and science of living. Like any modern scientist he has said that mass and energy are interchangeable. He takes us to the point where Einstein in a way has led: "Matter is where the concentration of energy is greatest."

INTRODUCTION

An introduction to Thiru-Valluvar and his work Thiru-Kural is difficult because it calls for an entire rendering of Tamil history down the ages, perhaps through many millenia of the civilized life of the Tamil people. Since the history is more sacred than profane, which therefore gives it the ageless character, we are liberated from the modern and peculiarly profane point of view. That enables more appropriate renderings and assessments than would be available to the purely scholastic aud modern approaches. In tee latter are perhaps available points of view which must reflect our own abnormalities, caught as we are in the speed in which events today are being unfolded as well as distorted.

The **Kural** of Valluvar is the entirety of the Tamil life which, though rolled into a past, present and future, is an ever-present **Now** over-riding all time and space perceptions. That is why when the name of Valluvar or Kural is mentioned there is a response even from the most ignorant Tamil and this comes from the depth of his being.

Unlike Taoism, for example, which was pure met aphysic and reserved for an elite, the Tamil man's social and

economic life was religious only in the special sense conveyed by Kural.

It transcended even the remotest thought of or involvement in self-interest so that the social order developed a coherence and validity no longer seen in modern societies.

Tamil Nadu was at one time part and parcel of a larger geographical and cultural conglomerate until the time of the Lemurian cataclysm. Even today the influence of Tamil is seen in vast regions of South-East Asia and some recent scholars have referred to Tamil embassies in foreign courts including that of Augustus. The language was so universal as to drive home the concept of a goal and desting for mankind away from notions of division and even self-interest which other languages are wont to create.

பஃறுளியாற்றுடன் பன்மலையடுக்கத்துக்
குமரிக் கோடுங் கடல் கொள்ள
வடதிசைக் கங்கையும் இமயமுங் கொண்டு
தென்றிசையாண்ட தென்னவன் வாழி ... Silap. XI, 19-22)
யாதானு நாடாமா லூராமல் லென்னொருவன்
சாந்துணையும் கல்லாதவாறு ... (Kural 397)
* யாதும் ஊரே
யாவரும் கேளிர் ... (Puram, 192)

Throughout its history Tamil has, like the Tmil people's temple architecture, their music, dance - and other branches of study all categorised as sixty - four, given deep meaning to life. That alone enables the language to offer the only support today to a world torn by conflicts and to man himself who has become the unwitting slave of the play of the play of the oppsites or இரு வினை. The kopurams of temples which sprawl the Tamil land point to the resting and uplifted Feet of Siva, and Tamil, as sole interpreter of the cosmic Dance, gave meaning and abode

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* see note (1)

to the weary and tired struggling in the realm of causality. The concept of the Feet (அடி) symbolising the Still Point of the turning world is brought out in many places in this invocatory piece.

In all things it is the still point located at the centre which enables movement. It applies to humans, to all life, to the earth and the universe alike. It is part of modern physics that there is a ceaseless flow of energy encompassing endless motion and activity of which we humans are also part.

In this rhythmic Dance there is constant poise and balance right at the centre of all activity. Movement and activity, though they are essential properties of matter, are directed from a Centre - a still point. To understand the universe is also to understand this Still Point which is all that these invocatory kurals are striving to indicate. Where Valluvar speaks of the 'Feet' so often and so reverentially, there is not merely poetry but science as well. The Dance of the Lord is everywhere and when rest is found at his Feet, the soul has been redeemed from the bonds that tie it bonds called **anavam, kanman** and **mayai.** When these are torn as under illusion and deeds are also burnt away.

Ananda Coomaraswamy in his "Dance of Shiva" explains the meaning brought out in Unmai Vilakkam -V32, 37, 39 :

> "The Supreme Intelligence dances in the soul...... for the purpose of removing our sins. By these means, our Father scatters the darkness of illusion (**Mayai**), burns the thread of causality (**kanmam**), stamps down evil (**anavamalam**) and lovingly plunges the soul in the ocean of Bliss (**anantham**). They never see rebirths, who behold this mystic dance".

It was therefore that the Tamil Man's greatest sociologist and interpreter of life, Valluvar, in his first ten

dedicatory kurals gave place to Siva's Feet தாள் or அடி in seven of them.

At this stage it is relevant to say why it was that the Dance of Shiva entered the soul of the Tamil man and gave way to an unparalleled literature in music, dance and poetry that no people in the world can boast of. It is a Dance of the cosmos in which all names and forms are destroyed. As Coomaraswamy says, it is a Dance that "sends through inert matter pulsing waves of awakening sound." In his "Dance of Shiva" Coomaraswamy gave beautiful expression to this : "No artist of today, however great could more exactly or more wisely create an image of that energy which science must postulate behind all phenomena. If we would reconcile Time with Eternity, we can scarcely do so otherwise than by the conception of alterations of space and great tracts of time......In the night of Brahma, Nature is inert, and cannot dance till Shiva wills it: he rises from his rapture, and dancing sends through inert matter pulsing waves of awakening sound, and lo ! matter also dances appearing as a glory round about Him. Dancing, He sustains its manifold phenomena. In the fullness of time, still dancing, He destroys all forms and names by fire and gives new rest. This is poetry; but none the less, science"

Tamil evolved so that it built towers into the skies thereby projecting a dimension out of time into eternity. The Kopurams in temple architecture expressed the Tamil mind's move from the profane to the sacred, from the banalities of time into a space - time continum. It is therefore that the artisans who even now create the multitudinous and sprawling **Kopurams** of Tamil Nadu continue to remain one of the most profound occupational castes still surviving.

The Tamils are a race of people who consciously grappled with concepts of the time and space in all their

relativity and found them of negative value. Therefore there emerged the only forceful argument that art and life do not belong to self - assertion. They called for a thesis because it was better and even necessary "to see face to face, than through a glass darkly." Hence it is that Valluvar's religion all the time extends to life in all its acceptable and worth - while particulars, both here now on earth and beyond. Therefore the **Kural** is a call for constant revolt - in other words for a revolution so that the order may not be sullied by irrational pleasure.

A. B. Keith wrote * : The first principle of democracy ....is that no one knows the final truth about anything". He was speaking for the modern world - its meanderings and confabulations. Valluvar enunciated the Tamil man's democracy which never diviated from the primordial truth and where there was no meandering. The understanding of truth was a deep pursuit of the Tamil people as one can see from **Kural**. As apart from the rest of Sangam literature, it became the common man's vocabulary of learning as answer to all the problems of life and beyond. It was a store - house of wisdom unlike anything that modern universities can give.

As one browses through **Kural** there is found in it all that is needed to be known of the **here** and **now.** Birth at one end is not a fullness but a conditioning ro **pethamai** (பேதைமை). It is a beginning in darkness followed by a struggle to know in part until the fullness of light and realisation dawns. We today, who have made a vice of industry, are beset with economic and psychic ills to become aware of Valluvar's analysis of the need to realise truth. Valluvar was an elite in that unanimous community called Tamil and hence his guidance became vocational. His life itself was vocational and that qualified him as teacher of doctrinal and metaphysical truth which was easily understood by the Tamil mind to which ever strata

* Aitareyo Aranyaka p. 42

it may have belonged. It was example in the best manner of what was that of house - holder or இல்வாழ்வான்.

Valluvar has an insight into the real or inner man - the man in everyman - which was accessible, as some may say, only to the eye of contemplation. In the pre-colonialist Tamil society, Valluvar was all that daily life signified to the Tamil people. He was not reported in books and stored away in libraries. **Kural** was on the tongues of all people because that was an essential passport to life, if it did not represent the whole meaning of life.

To search for the doctrinal form of the Primordial Tradition leads inevitably to the **kural.** That was the most scientific and authentic presentation of Tradition. No language today can transcend **kural's** perspectives because to gather all its fountain of wisdom has taken Tamil itself a long and memorable history. It was a great voyage of discovery to find out the nature of truth. It is a history writ large among a people long ago gone weary of self-assertion and whose minds had not been exposed to the ill-winds of corruption which blow from all corners of the modern world.

One cannot fail to remember Rene Guenon's observation that it is "the Primordial Tradition, out of which every other tradition has issued and which alone endures from beginning to end." † **Kural** certainly can be even said to codify that Primordial Tradition in a language particularly suited to that purpose and also considering the age of Tamil or rather of Dravidian civilisation. The special merit of Tamil for this is a matter for another study, but this introduction to Valluvar's **Kural** is also to enable the Western elite - (that number too all over is fast shrinking) — also to seek in this masterpiece the proper guide to (a) a theory of social life where man can proceed from the

† Crisis of the Modern World - Page 20)

external and verbal to the real, (b) a grasp of ultimate reality based on principles which constitute knowledge in its essence and therefore in its entirety and (c) a theory of government which enables the elevation of man from inconsequent activity and delivers him from the mechanical and pitiless logic of present - day events — a deliverance in other words, from the whirlpool of inconsequent and futile activity. Where the emphasis on Tradition goes — because Tamil entirely represents it — there is need to draw a line where modern 'progress' leads at least materially. The so-called objective knowledge of matter precludes all efforts to apply what Nature mirrors in events. Rather it has despiritualised nature thereby destroying man's mystical identity with it. To compensate, however, modern man is beginning to realize and postulate the existence of an unconscious psyche in the effort to know the Truth which is itself a Primordial experience.

The modern world needs feeling and emotion. Psychology too supports the view that emotion creates light. In the words of C. G. Jung, "Emotion is the moment when steel meets flint and a spark is struck forth, for emotion is the chief source of consciousness. There is no change from darkness to light or from inertia to movement without emotion." * Valluvar's presentation of **Kural** is the peak of emotion which, at the sociological, political and religious levels, no literature of the world has so far reached.

The traditional point of view which Valluvar embraces is the universal and all-comprehending. This is because it derives from metaphysical, not profane understanding. On the other hand the modern and 'scientific' based on purely utilitarian and pragmatic levels have made man an incoherent social and political animal. This is seen in the steady

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* (P.35 "Psychological Reflections" - C.G. Jung, edited by Jolande Jacobi).

disintegration of personality whilst it has caused the death of old polarizations. Traditional vocabularies in the process have been made shambles. The movement from the beat of the heart to that of the machine. the obsession with bigness called macrophilia which is what is evident all round has led to a decline to a psychic one-sidedness. For the creative image of life which Valluvar emphasises in Aram அறம் is last in modern thinking and destroyed altogether in modern 'Tamil' lands, **Aram** really transmuted personal destiny into the destiny of mankind and it is the only thing which Valluvar found for mankind to find refuge from every peril and to outlive the longest night which belongs only to the ego, Modern attitudes are a denigration of the spirit of man—an attempt to put a lid on the volcano—because modern man is all the time bothered only by the elemental forces of the psyche.

The factors that govern industrial civilization are evil because their appetites are gargantuan and fleshly. These have in turn have created a war-prone world where life stripped of culture has become oppressive and heavy and where ecologically there is imbalance and a precarious precipitation towards all that can be called evil. Valluvar gave special emphasis to **Aram** in his Chapter on அறன் வலியுறுத்தல் for the simple reason that, in asserting and affirming this transcendent principle, the evils of any age will not become precipitate on the Tamil people.

The concept of தமிழகம் (Tamilazham) meant something quite distinct. It was distinct from the modern concept of a State because the custodians and rulers were quite different in the sense that they were the repositories of culture, learning, enlightment and social transformation through that all-pervasive vehicle — the language itself. As a recent critic said. "The Tamils made the desert bloom. They have the distinction of being, perhaps the only people in history who,

while not being desert dwellers, made poetry bloom in the desert."

Valluvar was representative of a distinctive culture which is that of the Tamil man—agriculture. The plough became symbol of culture which the Tamilman had taken to many countries of the world as the substance of agriculture meaning thereby a fulfilment.

உழுதுண்டு வாழ்வாரே வாழ்வார் மற்றெல்லாம்
தொழுதுண்டு பின் செல்பவர்.

P. W. Ellis, formerly of the Madras Civil Service, says in his book 'Thirukkural : "The veneration in which the Tamil people formerly held the plough was unbounded. The numerous remains of ancient art, existing in all parts of the country, consist almost exclusively in buildings intended for religious and charitable purposes and those reservoirs, channels and embankments, which, by restraining and distributing the waters of the periodical rains, rendered the soil fit for the labours of the husbandman. Many of these are stupendous works and must have been erected when a great portion of the wealth of the country was systematically applied to the agricultural improvement of it; when in fact the cultivators of the soil were, as tradition states them to have been, the nobles of the land and their application alike the source of wealth and honour."

To those caught in the snares of the modern industrial and commercial activity, the alarm is already there to escape the shipwreck of the present commercial - industrial world. Valluvar's thoughts are unchanging and therefore superior to change. His knowledge was true because it identified itself with its object and he struck at universal principles in all things - whether it be religion, culture, agriculture, statecraft or love. He abjured the unceasing flux of the senses and thus became for us the instrument of true knowledge.

This book - the first of a series - leads up to ninety **kurals** treated as one corpus. Valluvar has bequeathed to mankind 1330 **Knrals** and it has generally been accepted that the entirety would fall under three categories as Aram அறம், Porul பொருள் and Inpam. இன்பம்.

It is found necessary to give emphasis to the higher values to which the entirety of Valluvar's work has to be related. These were that of a proper meaning of the Divine and guiding principle, the relationship of the sky to earth as a beatific and benign arrangement, the meaning and greatness of renunciation as a transcending and elevating goal, the highest embodiment of social living found in **aram** and its application to the functioning of that ordered society called Tamil - its characteristics and motivations - are here dealt with as proper introduction.

I must thank Dr. Avvai Natarajan, Secretary to the Tamil Nadu Government on Tamil Language and Culture for enabling me to present this new translation in exegesis and commentary of **Kural** which many scholars - Indian and foreign - have in their own light presented in the past.

Since the **Kural** is of a different kind from other classical texts and, since Tamil Nadu especially needs a new drive towards its study and veneration in every portal of learning and, since the world needs some insight where the perspectives of modern approaches in social sciences, government, human relationships, love, etc. can be rooted in the most ancient of religions - Saivism, I have—under taken this task in humility and trepidation no doubt. For, who can render in a profane modern European language the truths of **Thiru-Kural** except give way for some better interpreters in the future ?

For the present I offer my work to the Tamil people in humility as a Tamil and as one who, for many years,

longed to work in Tamil Nadu but was prevented from doing so by accident of birth and upbringing in Sri Lanka.

To the kindest of men, to one of the best representatives of Tamil upbringing and culture, to Dr. Avvai Natarajan, who the Tamil Nadu Government has elevated to high office to deal with Tamil Language and Culture, I am grateful for this humble effort. It is also on behalf of the few remaining Tamils who still cherish Tamil and its greatest expositor in the fields of religion, sociology, culture, theory of government, nay, of life itself - Thiruvalluvar, the Sage of Tamil Nadu.

I must conclude with my humble thanks to Dr A. N. Perumal Director, International Institute of Tamil Studies, Madras who has given his love and attention to the subject now handled here as one deeply involved in Tamil studies and the Tradition which made Tamil the greatest, if not the oldest of the world's languages. I am deeply beholden to him.

Valluvar spoke through Tamil but he conveyed truths embedded in a language universal to mankind. He not merely called for revolutions of a kind which no modern thinker, writer or leader can sufficiently and comprehensively project without harm to the human personality. He provided mankind with a doctrine based on social discipline and self-denial that can nowhere else be found except in Tamil territory. This effort is made in the humble hope that the people of Tamil Nadu will once again and very soon return to their own. The discovery of their identity and any new resurgence following it depend entirely on how soon they can make Valluvar once again their own.

The **Kural** needs serious study as a social science which contains a revolutionary call no doubt with an abiding meaning given to life itself. Human life essentially carries

with it an impulse to wider and fuller perceptions. If the ego has to be constrained and limited, as indeed it must be, more particularly during the present age, there is need to stand up openly against the massed forces of obscurantism associated with the ego. The darkness within has to be made conscious and true if judgement is to stand between the poposites.

NOTE (1)

This unique poem belonging to about the 1st - 3rd Centuries A. D, typical of traditional thinking, brings to focus something more beautiful and comprehensive than immediate experience. It drives home the truth that the human psyche unaffected by the pulls of the opposites is a mighty and everlasting thing. It sees a unity in all things which makes the world its own without fragmentation or conflict.

The wisdom of all ages and peoples is here said in the most superb language. It belongs to a tradition where numinosity was never sullied except today under the false spirit of arrogance and worldly - mindedness that parades as modern Tamil poetry, prose and journalism.

Nevertheless the poem, like all others of the past, brings a renewal in thought that the water will return to its old bed. The collective consciousness is here reflected which is for the most part typical of Valluvar.

The psychology here is beyond the reach of just individual consciousness. It brings to surface the visible reality of the world within us. The small and great are reconciled and the opposites move into a sort of transcendental territory.

The whole poem from **Puranaooru** goes as follows :

புறநானூறு 192

யாதுமூரே யாவரும் கேளிர்
தீது நன்றும் பிறர்தர வாரா
நோதலுந் தணிதலு மவற்றோ ரன்ன
சாதலும் புதுவதன்றே வாழ்தல்
இனிதென மகிழ்ந்தன்று மிலமே முனிவின்
இன்னா தென்றலு மிலமே மின்னொரு
வானந் தண்டுளி தலைஇ யானாது
கல்பொரு திரங்கு மல்லல் பேர்யாற்று
நீர்வழிப் படூஉம் புணைபோ லாருயிர்
முறை வழிப் படூஉ மென்பது திறவோர்
காட்சியிற் தெளிந்தன மாகலின் மாட்சியிற்
பெரியோரை வியத்தலும் மிலமே
சிறியோரை யிகழ்த லதனினு மிலமே.

Translation :

"Our home the whole world
All men our kinsmen
Good nor evil, pain nor joy
From others do not befall.
Death to us no stranger is
Nor doth life elate by sweetness.
In pain no less we find cause for grief.
From visions of Seers we know
That life's course is natural
Like unto a raft in mighty waters caught
Ever roaring and beating on the rocks
As cold rain pours
From flashing skies:
And so we wonder not at the great
Still less the small disdain.

1. A Preamble of Adoration to the Immanent and Transcendent Being.

The word for God in Tamil gives the comprehensive meaning of the transcendent (கட) and immanent (உள்). Here, as with all things related to Tradition, Valluvar gives the cogent reasons that make such an invocatory beginning obligatory. That is the way of self - surrender implied in knowledge and self - realisation. One cannot communicate truths to others without being obliged for the Truths which emerge from a Supreme Being because man is not an end in himself. The world cannot be taught and led except by those fitted and fitness itself is reached under great humility.

In these ten verses Valluvar gives us the attributes of Divinity whilst pointedly in the manner of T. S. Eliot referring to "the weariness of men who turn from God" ‡ The principle behind divinity is beyond all opposites. Though in everything two opposite tendencies are traceable, in the concept of divinity there is liberation from the pairs of opposites.

The introductory chapter is a call for surrender of the ego because life in the latter is always dull, barren and meaningless. The call of Valluvar to adoration of the Immanent and Transcendent sets the pace for fulfilment. In the trampling down of the ego there is a function for the spirit. That function becomes very necessary as it is the spirit which endows human nature with power—a power capable of extending the bounds of personality **ad infinitum**. The meaning here is brought out beautifully in **Thiruvasaham :** வெந்து விழும் உடற்பிறவி மெய் என்று வினை பெருக்கி. **(Achcho - pathiham)**

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‡ Kural 7.

Birth is due to involvement in the dualities but the body which is engulfed in this snare keeps on multiplying the involvement until liberation becomes inevitable. In death which is a growing beyond oneself there is a liberation outside the pull of the dualities.

The ego condition which is indispensable to the conscious process also points to a consciousness transcending the ego. When Valluvar speaks of the Resting Foot of Siva in seven out of ten invocatory **Kurals**, his call is a vehement one for the surrender of the ego. The entire social order which is sought to be presented in terms of liberation comes from this surrender. The value and efficacy of the Tamilian social order given such meaningful elaboration in **Kural** arises from the call for surrender of the ego to the self as the supreme psychic authority.

In the very concept of God is a singleness of meaning where the stress is on the Resting Foot (அடி) which means a constant awareness of the Still Point brought out most forcibly by T. S. Eliot. To put it in another way, the psychic becomes the core - a sort of mathematical Point and thus the very essence of existence. There is therefore in the introverted mind a self - liberating power. At the Still Point alone is **gnosis** which is explained clearly by Thirumoolar :

திருவடி ஞானஞ் சிவமாக்கு விக்குந்
திருவடி ஞானஞ் சிவலோகஞ் சேர்க்குந்
திருவடி ஞானஞ் சிறைமல மீட்குந்
திருவடி ஞானமே திண்சித்தி முத்தியே

"The gnosis of the Resting Foot makes for the Siva state,
The gnosis of the Resting Foot takes the being to Heavenly abode,
The gnosis of the Resting Foot liberates from entanglement in the **malas**

The gnosis of the Resting Foot is the firm state
of Bliss in liberation."

(Thiru - manthiram 1598)

Thiruvadi or Resting Foot of the Cosmic Dancer is completely emptied of movement or momentary contents. This comes very close to Einstein's efforts to reduce physical quantities to mathematical principles. The Foot at Rest is objective identity as distinct from the subjective which is the basis of modern science. The feeble instruments available for subjective analysis are themselves sufficient to show the total inadequacy of the latter. Where the Self is realised at the Still Point there dawns a knowledge of wholeness and integrality which is archetypal. On the other hand, where the ego is pushed to the seat of objective identity instead of to its proper domain—the objective, there is recurrence in birth and ignorance. That is what the last **Kural** of Chapter 1 dedicated to the Immanent and Transcendent (கடவுள்) has to say. It means that birth and death are ever - recurring to those who have failed to reach the Resting Foot or Still Point of the Great Dancer.

At that Point is Rest, Fufilment and Beatitude and at that Point the Self becomes the central Archetype or Archetype of wholeness. That Point is the Central Reference to which consciousness can advance meaningfully. In terms of psychology consciousness is the precondition of being. It is the psyche which carries with it the dignity of a cosmic principle. In all nature man represents the peak of this consciousness and Valluvar exposited the great Truths only now understood through psychology.

The Still Point which is identified in the Unmoved Centre of Siva's Dance is a call to surrender which is

all that is meant to be conveyed in these invocatory couplets. From this Central Point of reference the **Kural** proceeds to the creative activity called life and its manifold relationships, functions and responsibilities. Thus a social responsibility is created calling for disciplines and functions which all the time called for surrender of the ego.

Valluvar seeks consistently to differentiate the the ego from the demands and fulfilments of the collective. He thus makes it clear that the strengthening of social personality is an essential pre - requisite for existence. He was the one in the history of the human race who generated the vital energy needed for the proper functioning of society. There was deep meaning and fulfilment in that society which is beautifully explained in this invocatory Chapter. Siva—the eternal Cosmic Dancer—pointed the way to that meaning and fulfilment.

Valluvar's wisdom was part of the entire tradition and therefore transcended the rational order. If sacred doctrines are to be preserved from dlsintegration, they have to be dedicated to a higher principle. Otherwise, mere cursory and profane treatment will contribute to a decline in perceptions, and in the measure of all things, as only belonging to man as an end in himself.

The "abomination of desolation" referred to in the Gospels is indicative of what can be a deep state of degeneracy. That had to be arrested, if not prevented and Valluvar, despite all his revolutionary social spirit, did not foreswear what in Tradition was needed to be done. No work or masterpiece existed except from a divine source which was only its strength. In these invocatory Kurals Valluvar emphasises the highest intensity that life is—an intensity present all the time, realised and inwardly felt only through disciplined understanding.

One cannot read Valluvar with mental attitudes born of the market place. These attitudes unfortunately have today moved into the very vortex of life. The cult of bigness which has overcome all things has thrown overboard the disciplines towards intensity of thinking, feeling or realisation. The result is that these ten **Kurals** dedicated to a Transcendent Power are being lost in modern Tamilian education and life. On the other hand there are new polarisations from opportunistic and commercialised levels which seek in Valluvar only portions which are thought of as 'applicable' to 'modern' life. This has made a shambles of traditional values, vacabularies and ennobling experiences.

Without a proper and reverential understanding of this invocatory chapter, Valluvar's presentation of life on other levels—educational, political, sociological, cultural etc.—would only result in superficial and cursory understanding. That would detract from the intrinsic and perennial value of Valluvar for mankind, more especially in an age of declining perceptions and values.

It is therefore proper that **Kural** is taught in all universities to all undergraduates of Tamilnadu and that only by teachers imbued with traditionalist values and disciplines. This is one way of making **Kural** the doctrinal teaching which it primarily is. There has to be a balance between deep and abiding values and the commercial advantage posed by the present emphasis on science and commerce. A new India has to emerge through a proper and meaningful education system than the destructive one now operating.

The evil of **de facto** materialism accepted as the desired advantage of modern science has brought its trail of evil as it penetrates deeper and gets more widely diffused. In Valluvar, however, no attempt is made to reduce quality to quantity because, in line with tradition, he gave utterance only to perennial truths.

Most modern education in India and Sri Lanka and especially in Tamil Nadu has eroded traditional and sacred values in order to give way to the most deadly forms of Western propaganda directed to a so - called intelligence. Valluvar was equally a great educationist, in fact the greatest so far seen or heared of. He would not have sacrificed the great truths of Tradition to deny the Divinity— immanent and transcendent — in order to create a social order that deforms and distorts man's understanding of himself.

If Tamils have to become masters in their home, the doctrinal value of this invocation has to be fully comprehended and preserved. The sooner we retreat from the instincts of cupidity and violence brought about through that barbarous materialism issuing from the West, the greater will be our redemption.

1) அகர முதல எழுத்தெல்லாம் ஆதி
பகவன் முதற்றே உலகு.

In the beginning was the primordial Sound 'அ' or "A"
That took form as first of all letters.
The world too began in the measure of time
As conjoint principle ஆதி 'Athi' and பகவன் 'Pahavan'

Here the concept of beginning ushers in a concept of time and space in which the first sound or **akshara** அ is produced. For a sacred language such as Tamil, this recognises a cosomological order in which the conjoint principles ஆதி **Athi**, the feminine and பகவன் **Pahavan**, the masculine, become co—existent. In man is the microcosm which holds within it the macrocosm, and Valluvar takes us to sacred science which forms part and parcel of traditional sciences.

This meaning is reflected forcibly in traditional mystic poetry and in the imagery of Siva as "**Arthanareeswarar**". In this **Kural**, **Athibhagavan** ஆதிபகவன் conveys the universally identified and venerated idea of surrendering one half to the feminine. Thus the Tamil word **athi - bhahavan** ஆதிபகவன் means "Him who gave his one half away" (உடம்பைப் பகுத்துக் கொடுத்தவன்). Here is enacted simultaneously a supreme value as well as a supreme negation, the knowledge of which lightens the self beyond all bounds. Here, away from the mind's destractions, consciousness is made to flow into the depths. It is a pointer to the heights reached in Saiva Siththantham.

In musicology, the concept of sound is further expanded and dealt with. அ is the first **in principio**. It is the **akshara** which ushers in the **Om Pranava** consisting of ஆ. இ ம், அ or 'A' begins with the opening of the mouth as the first sound of life and completes the **pranava manthra** with the -ம் which comes entirely from within. In **thanam** singing in Carnatic music this meaning is very forcefully brought out, being itself the very substance of music in resonance and expression.

Parimelazahar, the best—known commentator, refers to அ as the first in the order of sound - the **Mathirai** or **akshara** which is of the very order of nature நாத மாத்திரையாகிய இயல்பா பிறந்திருந்தாலும் Sanskrit too begins the same way, says the commentator. The reason is that both languages are simply not profane and their preceptions are more often both physical and meta – physical. This same cannot be extended to Western languages, founded as they are on profane levels and which has led many commentators and translators to err in getting at the root meanings of Valluvar's "Kural".

Sound is the subtlest of the five elements being connected with space or ether. **Osai Oli** ஓசை ஒளி are

Tamil word formations which represent the Primordial Sound — the ஓ signifying the 'elephant' god or **Vinayakar**. Hence it is the very Beginning of things and logically Valluvar begins his Kural that way. In Valluvar's God and his invocation in this first Kural is Tamil Tradition exemplified in the best way possible.

2) கற்றதனாலாய பயனென்கொல் வாலறிவன்
நற்றாள் தொழாஅர் எனின்,

Of what use, tell thou, is all learning,
If, at the Feet of Him,
The Fount of all Wisdom
One does not prostrate ?

Here Valluvar equates learning with first principles — humility and obeisance at the Feet of Him who represents all knowledge. The great love of learning among the Tamil people is chiefly derived from inspired sources such as Valluvar. Learning and God are equated here to show how unlimited the way is to knowledge, understanding and realisation.

There is a goal for all human effort. The purpose of learning is to destroy ignorance by which effort alone is it possible to reach the goal which is at Siva's Feet (அடி). The question is both asked and answered. What doth is profit a man in his efforts to learn if it be not to reach fulfilment at the Feet of Omniscience ? The Feet become the fixed goal and liberation is needed from many afflictions which are later explained.

Valluvar speaks of Feet (அடி) and, coming as he does in the tradition of Thirumoolar, it is clear that the Feet refer to those of Siva where alone the symbolism conveys tremendous value and meaning. The Feet convey the meaning of the Cosmic Dance with all its manifold

symbolisms. Ananda Coomaraswamy in his essay on the "Dance of Shiva" traces how "it became in time the clearest image of the activity of God which any art or religion can boast of." There is copious literature and poetry in Tamil on this and Tamil Nadu's as well as Sri Lanka's temples are replete with this symbolism in all its expressiveness and beauty.

The Dance represents the Lord's five activities — creation or evolution, preservation or support, destruction or involution, veiling or illusion as well as Release through the bestowal of Grace. The symbolism is explained in Unmai Vilakkam (உண்மை விளக்கம்) Verse 36 translated thus: "Creation arises from the drum: protection proceeds from the hand of hope: from fire proceeds destruction: the Foot aloft gives Release." Thirumoolar calls it "the perpetual Dance which is His play."

Valluvar refers to the Foot of Siva symbolising Release or Liberation because all learning is a struggle to be liberated from the pulls of ignorance and the contraries of the dualities (இரு வினை).

3) மலர்மிசை யேகினான் மாணடி சேர்ந்தார்
நிலமிசை நீடு வாழ்வார்.

Life eternal is for him
Who the gracious Feet hath reached
Of him who dwelleth
In the hearts of all beings.

In Tradition, the heart is where all responses and feelings are felt inwardly and its natural softness is likened to a lotus flower with all its petals delicately and softly arranged. It is most delicate, beautiful and most graceful as it blooms from out of the muddy waters. Valluvar feels figuratively a tenderness and attractiveness in the flower which is likened to the heart as it blooms forth.

The heart is where divinity can bloom if only it is untainted and unsullied by corruption.

To live long is to be unsullied and uncorrupted. An impure being is unwelcome anywhere, but those with the fragrance of incorruptibility are welcome and accepted. This itself makes for longevity.

Almost with the refrain of the **Bhagavad Gita,** Valluvar says that "the Lord is seated in the hearts of all beings" for which the hearts have to become the receiving points such as the lotus. Valluvar here deals with a metaphysical doctrine which places Divinity in the heart and which is here likened to a lotus—an ineffable state of purity needed for such abode.

4) வேண்டுதல் வேண்டாமையிலானடி சேர்ந்தார்க்கு
யாண்டும் இடும்பை இல.

At the Feet of Him
Devoid of likes and dislikes,—
To those tormented by these—
No grief ever is known.

The modern world in which Tamils too have been engulfed is too self—assertive which precludes grasp of what is meant by the surrender of the ego to Him without likes and dislikes (வேண்டுதல் வேண்டாமை). Freedom for the liberated mind is not for those involved in self—assertion. For those who have lost the illusion of the ego, there is no self—interest. The ego is a bundle of likes and dislikes and the concept of liberation is from these dualities.

There is a Guiding Principle which is outside all opposing tendencies and this is how Valluvar presents Divinity in this **Kural.**

The world is weary having fallen headlong into the opposing or contra—opposed influences which are daily being multiplied by materialism. Hence it is strife—torn and weary as well as beset with grief (இடும்பை). Valluvar's Pathway to the Feet of the Lord would need its own effort at understanding what is meant by poise, sanity and repose, which he here points out is at the Feet only. At that place only is Bliss.

5. இருள் சேர் இருவினையுஞ் சேரா இறைவன்
பொருள் சேர் புகழ் புரிந்தார் மாட்டு.

The substance of His Fullness
To those in song adore,
The darkness of the Dualities
Do not assail.

There is a meaning to Fullness given in Saiva poetry and music which cannot be explained in a short comment. Fullness comes only through liberation from the pairs of opposities. The pairs of opposites lie in the ego since "the ego grows out of the darkness of the psyche," as C. G. Jung would say † The philosophy of Saiva Siththantham posits Siva at the very centre of the dualities, but all the same outside them. In that stance or position He becomes the Physician par excellance or Redeeming Principle, centred as He is between the afflictions of the Dualities. Jung has also observed : "In the union of the opposites is revealed the **summa medicina,** which heals not only the body but the spirit". The great Saiva mystics constantly harped on the freedom from the opposites because they realised the Centre.

The concept of the dualities and the need to seek freedom from good and evil are written into **Saiva Siththantha**. The rejection of utilities is one of liberation from the pulls of

† (P. 108 "Mysterium Coniuntionis).

the dualities. Thus any revolution associated with the soul is outside external pulls. Otherwise what repulses is irrational pleasure.

Ananda Coomoraswamy speaks of the delights of inward contemplation thus : "What is implied by contemplation is to raise our level of reference from the empirical to the ideal, from observation to vision, from the auditory sensation to audition." * In Jung's words "only unconsciousness makes no difference between good and evil. ** It is organised religions such as Christianity which have made the antinomy of good and evil into a world problem. Thus has resulted today in surrender to every form of strife and restlessness - the consequence of the acceptanc only of the judgment of the intellect.

To be involved in the dualities is to strip the world of its numinosity. In the dualities is found a nominalistic point as distinct from the realistic. The marked rise of empiricism is due to this modern development. Jung would say of this situation that "it is the Idea that has evaporated into a mere **flatus voicis**. "Our levels of understanding have descended to the most profane and even absurd while our intellectual arrogance grows to the level of a violation of life itself. Thus what is revealed today is not merely superficial and stupid but also presumptious.

Valluvar calls the dualities (இருவினை) as capable only of generating darkness. There is therefore need all the time to shatter the narrow range of consciousness found in the opposites. That creates the needed tension to develop higher and wider consciousness which is supra-personal. This effort alone brings daylight to the psyche.

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* (P. 37 - "Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art").
** (Collected Works 9, Part 11. Page 97).

Right from the time of Tholkappianar, formulations of principles are to be found in Tamil which help to break through the envelope which temporarily confines man to the short span of a physical life tied with the dualities, In fact the very aim of Tamil poetry has been to emphasise the redeeming principle from the pairs of opposites. **(For further elucidation please see appendix containing excerpts from a paper read on 12th May, 1984 by the commentator at the First International Seminar on Saiva Siththantham held at Dharmapuram).**

Valluvar here rightly associates the dualities with darkness (இருள்) and brings out the incontestable claim that this darkness appears no where near those who have realised in song the glory of the Effulgent Fullness.

6. பொறிவாயில் ஐந்தவித்தான் பொய்தீர் ஒழுக்க
நெறி நின்றார் நீடு வாழ்வார்.

The deathless state to reach,
Liberation it is from falsehood,
When path ahead is found,
Senses, verily, are restrained.

This verse is difficult where translation goes. The meaning is intense and calls for explanation through the **tatvas** which form part and parcel of Saiva Siththantham. The five sense organs - body, mouth, eyes, nose and ears- drive man in diverse directions through each individual instrument of perception. Diverse desires are born through each and the modern world is classic example of the multiplying desires which cause ceaseless agitation,

Since the speed of events also indicate a precipitate decline, there is dispersion on all sides due mainly to lack of consciousness of unifying principles. From synthesis of thought which is the essential feature of the Tamil Tradition there is found on all sides sub-division and disintegration in all spheres.

The result is the emergence of strife and conflict within individuals and among peoples. Unity is attained only through consciousness of universal principles. To achieve such unity there is the need to control the senses whereupon perceptions which are ultimately true and real become accessible.

The ineptitude for synthesis which is peculiar to modern societies is the result of allowing the senses to wander at will and without purpose. Very few realise today that there is an inspiration higher than the human mind. There is today a dichotomy so that the old polart balance between physical and meta-physical can never be reached — the sign no doubt of a visible decay and degeneration.

The eye can be treated as example of the use of sight at two different levels—the physical and therefore common place and the mystical. The eye is an organism which confronts light mainly spatial. The psychic or non-spatial vision such as that of Manikkavasagar in திருவண்டப் பகுதி was able to see the universe as the condensation of the living process which is the primordial image. He saw the creature activity of living matter both microcosmically and macrocosmically. What is just light becoms vision and effulgence under tremendously powerful psychic factors. In all human beings is present the psychic organ which is the archetype in terms of modern psychology. It is the ground life of every being in which is understood the eternal life of the species.

7) தனக்குவமை இல்லாதான் தாள் சேர்ந்தார்க்கல்லால்
மனக்கவலை மாற்றல் அரிது.

In throes of grief remain
Who reach not Him - Him without compere—
At whose Feet alone
Final rest doth lie.

There is bondage for those who allow their senses unbridled play (**Kural 6**) and for those caught in the web of the dualities (**kural 5**). All these imply bondage causing grief and misery which in turn are the outcome of the weariness implied in pursuit only of a materialistic living—"the weariness of men," as T.S. Eliot says, "who turn from God." The more the modern world pursues materialism as an end in itself, the more do its objects of giving material happiness appear utopean. Thinking has become stereotyped and mass—manufactured folowing as it does from concentrated image—factories to millions of consumers around. Industrial civilisation today is turning out to be psychologically oppressive and ecologically dangerous as well as precarious.

Siva represents the universe within and without brought effectively in **Thiruvasagam** "திருவண்டப் பகுதி" There the mystic's eye penetrates the most distant spaces-the universe within which is also the universe without. It is a meeting of the media of both body and psyche to a centre both in the world and outside it.

Man is becoming a split personality caught as he is in the invisible wedge driven into psyches. Thinking to-day is mainly on commercial levels. Standardisation and mass-manufacture are seen in concentrated image-factories which newspapers, radio, TV and other mass media represent. One sees the crazy trends towards phonograph records where even sacred music is yielding place to vulgar cassettes displaying pop or cinema excitement.

The divinity within man is the "God without compare" and therefore dynamic. When we speak in terms of profanity, as we are wont to do in time and space determinants, we have moved away from **Kural.**

At the Feet is rest which means a complete surrender of the ego. Matter and activity cannot be separated and science would speak of the ceaseless flow of energy portraying endless motion and activity. That is Siva's rhythmic Dance of creation and involution. If people today lay great store by modern physics, they cannot fail to see the reconciliation between science and religion which great physicists have found in the dance of the cosmos The dynamic view of the universe which Saiva mystics such as Valluvar and Manikkavasagar had was all comparatively though similar to that of modern physics.

8) அறவாழி அந்தணன் தாள் சேர்ந்தார்க்கல்லால்
பிறவாழி நீந்தல் அரிது.

Difficult indeed to reach
That far-off Shore,
Except His Feet for guide !
He, the Repository of all knowledge,
The Fount of all Wisdom.

Here is brought into focus an incomparable simile used often by mystics such as Appar (மனமெனும் தோணி பற்றி) where life is compared to an ocean to be swum across. Life keeps going in this ocean of birth, death and recurrence until liberation comes.

In this Kural is stated in explicit terms that the harbour of final repose and rest is at the Feet of Omniscience (அறவாழி). The Foot is symbolic of the surrender of the ego to a Reality higher than it. The more one begins to know inwardly, the more humble is one's approach to knowledge.

Valluvar's knowledge was true because it is legitimised through the sanction of something superior—an authority that was spiritual and therefore, unlike most things today

which lack principle and therefore spell nothing but disorder and confusion. His was a knowledge by which things are made which in other words is beauty in the context for which it is designed.

Valluvar set forth an anthology and drew the map of life with a wisdom unequalled. He spoke with unequalled authority because he brought out what was related to the innermost nature. He shines as the supreme artist, having found perfection in his own vocation of teacher to the world. He has referred in these couplets only to those particulars that can be united to unifying principles.

The word **aram** (அறம்) in Tamil has its own special meaning and content which Valluvar uses to bring out the whole of life's attitudes co-equal with universal principles. There is something in it which conveys a purposive, ordered and divine destiny. The ocean of life calls for the struggle to liberate which can only come through true understanding and introspection.

9) கோளில் பொறியிற் குணமிலவே எண்குணத்தான்
தாளை வணங்காத் தலை.

To Him with supreme attributes eight,
Lo ! to His Feet in obeisance
The head that doth not bow,
Perceptions five to the head
Here endowed,
Are as nought indeed !

This is a beautiful couplet in original Tamil and the intensity of its meaning is not readily brought out in translation. To understand it calls for a sound knowledge of Saiva Siththantha philosophy. These supreme eight attributes are given to Siva as being the Highest Intensity of Life. These are :

i) Himself alone - தன்வயத்தனாதல்
ii) His Form the subtle state - தூயவுடம்பினனாதல்
iii) To Him realisation is of the natural order - இயற்கை யுணர்வினனாதல்.

iv) Consciousness in Him is whole and complete, not fragmented - முற்றுமுணர்தல்.

v) Detachment from sense directions His natural condition - இயல்பாகவே பாசங்களின் நீங்குதல்

vi) In Him the state of grace is immanent and supreme - பேரருடைமை

vii) Fullness in Him is inexhaustible- முடிவிலாற்றலுடைமை

viii) His state of Bliss is one of infinity - வரம்பில் இன்ப முடைமை.

This concept of Siva brings out the meaning of the Supreme Being as outside and veiled to gross understanding. Here is some from of close analogy drawn where, 'without seeing through a glass, darkly' there is an opening to 'see face to face'. From the obscurity of total ignorance we are able to see the naked Essence. This definition becomes at once the aid to a revolution from within thus restoring man to the better part which is the divine in him.

The knowledge derived through the unceasing flux of the senses cannot be the instrument for obtaining true knowledge, There is a supra—rational intelligence through which doctrines which constitute the essential are known and realised. In the attributes of Siva are principles that transcend modern concepts which create only multiplicity and discord. The laws of this cosmology have a transcendent as well as universal value and to know them great humility is called for. Whilst this leads on to truths known intuitively, it also releases the ego from the pull of the senses towards the world of matter. Whilst materialistic concepts must naturally be abandoned to the ignorant and

profane, Valluvar emphasised principles which create harmony and which form part of the great living tradition of the Tamils.

Valluvar's perceptions were of the ascending order proceeding from the outer to the inner and from lower to the higher. He takes us from the circumference to the centre where only there is consciousness of Reality and where sense directions do not come into play.

10) பிறவிப் பெருங்கடல் நீந்துவர் நீந்தார்
இறைவன் அடி சேராதார்.

The great ocean of re-birth
They cross not.
The other Shore they only reach
Who His Feet have held.

Birth and death are recurring states and liberation implies to escape their conditioning. Another way of saying this is that birth arises from failure of memory. To be liberated from this limiting condition is to restore one's memory by remembering. From a dis - membered state to a re-membered condition is the way of fulfilment. Ignorance brings about a struggle to be liberated and this means a passage through varied experiences caused by the play of the opposites. Liberation is to escape the constant pull of the opposites (இரு வினை) which struggle takes one inevitably to the other Shore symbolised by Siva's Feet.

It is here that there is harbour, peace and rest—the fulfilment of the human personality and individual destiny.

Valluvar calls birth a constantly recurring factor and life has to go through a vast of ocean of endless buffeting as well as struggle to reach the Other Shore.

Valluvar places the Feet as an imagery which points to safe harbour - a Feet always present so that the goal becomes understood as the only Reality. It all these ten verses the theme is one of Liberation which is as much as to say that man is in bondage all the time. Valluvar can be called the elite of all time because he never deviated from Truth of a super—human order which even today has relevance and validity. He knew life beyond the profanities of time and therefore gave meaning and purpose to human existence.

It is necessary that Tamil Nadu preserves this 'kernal of tradition' which is in danger of obliteration due to external, proselytising and aggressive influences. Greater attention has been given here to these invocatory couplets than given by any other commentator for reason that, without due reverence and proper understanding of this dedicatory portion, the entire outlook of Valluvar to bring about social and economic transformation of society will become only a class—room exercise devoid of content, meaning and purpose. Many vulgarities and profanities have crept into Tamil Nadu due to absence of a countervailing force or direction to make the Tamil people's life purposive and significant as it had been during millennia past.

What stems from alien and Western influences can be reduced by the proper approach, study and application of **Kural** to daily life and this task has to be undertaken by teachers learned and dedicated in the traditional sense. The time has come to expose the superficialities that parade as modern and Western education.

The concept of Siva's Foot and Its resting place in the hearts of men is found everywhere in the Sangam approved **Thiru-murais.** The Lord of Dance representing the cosmic process is not only movement all the time but rest at the Still Point as well. Movement and Rest

are simultaneous activities and the weariness of things is outside the Lord's activity. The opposites flow together -movement and stillness - like a river bringing fertility after a long drought. The course is not imperilled where the middle way has been found.

CHAPTER - II

A Homage - the attributes and blessings of rain-

11) வானின்றுலகம் வழங்கிவருதலால்
தானமிழ்தம் என்றுணரற் பாற்று.

The sky doth the earth hold
Where by life here
The heavens sustain. Thus rain becomes
Existence - life's very ambrosia.

It is also the Taoist point of view that life's processon is from heaven and earth which are the twin modalities of the Tao. Valluvar in this Chapter brings to being a heaven - ward concept where life is linked all the time with the sky or heaven. Valluvar's communication is through Tamil - a sacred language which foreswears profanity. He uses the language in such a way as to enable it to continue to be the effective medium that it was for the transmission of traditional doctrine.

Life has to be distinguished from the sacred and profane and its existence is linked with the elements of which water is one. In the marriage of heaven and earth, water takes prime importance. In this marriage there is a love which almost ravishes bringing to mind the words of Donne, "Nor ever chaste until thou ravish me". In this interconnectectedness is the highest flowering and sweetness (அமிழ்தம்).

In the same way as reverence is paid to the innermost divinity in the first Chapter, the homage to rain here is to take us out of the run of profane and self-willed attitudes.

Further, it has to be recognised that Valluvar's thoughts were, unlike ours, not just three-dimensional. The world or உலகம் in this **Kural** signifies life. The word வழங்குதல் meaning 'to stay' or 'have abode' emphasise that the sky is fixed and, without it, the earth will fade out of existence.

12. துப்பார்க்குத் துப்பாய துப்பாக்கித்
துப்பாய தூஉம் மழை.

Rain, indeed, of food is creator,
Nay, life's very food by itself!
Thus, for sustenance of life
Rain is the very Essence.

Food is the source of life's activity in the same way that air is. Water in addition to entering into the creation of food, is food itself in a direct way. Next to air which is **prana** or very breath, water takes precedence in the procession called life.

Here Valluvar exposits a **yoga sastra** by uniting heaven and earth. (**Annam**) and water (**Apo**) convey an esoteric meaning and in the sense in which Valluvar has rendered them, the door of understanding and perception become cleansed. Thus "all things would appear, as Blake says, "as they are, Infinite."

The mind gets cleansed as it goes through these Chapters which, in turn, remove the dust off the soul. The mind thus becomes the mirror of the soul, whilst the eye's view is that of transcendent wisdom (**gnosis**).

13) விண்ணின்று பொய்ப்பின் விரிநீர் வியனுலகத்
துண்ணின் றுடற்றும் பசி.

Hunger gnaws the being,
Nay, to its very innermost,
Where Heaven deceives
And the sea—girt earth
Receives no rain.

If rains fail, hunger can stalk the earth—paradoxically an earth already covered four—fifth by water. There is no need to emphasise how effectively this little realised truth is brought out in this **Kural**. The earth supports life whilst being life itself and this life receives sustaining power from a strength derived from above. All the vast oceans cannot provide water to support life on earth and this is particularly so for the human order.

Valluvar makes learning a humble pursuit by bringing into focus the interconnection between life here and the forces above. The education that Valluvar imparts becomes universal as well as all—comprehending and sober. In the study of **Kural** is also an effort at self—realisation which in a great way brings the world order into correct focus. There is a fullness brought into the understanding because the concepts are truthful and life—affirming.

14) ஏரினுழா ருழவர் புயலென்னும்
வாரி வளங்குன்றிக் கால்,

The ploughman will his **plough abandon**
If rain, the great bestower,
Its clouds in heaven
Bring not downpour:

The word ஏர் literally meaning plough conveys the sense of activity. For the Tamil people agriculture was throughout a culture. The plough represented the totality

of that culture which covered the manifold agricultural practices linking the earth with the sky. The determination of everything—seasons, ploughing which itself took a cyclic and cosmological pattern, harnessing of waters, irrigation etc—were all heaven—directed.

Rain itself was indicator of the cosmic arrangement and process and the Tamils knew the intimate connection between all things known in that order, both astronomically aud astrologically.

The word வாரி is difficult to translate into direct English. It has a comprehensive application to many things that have the natural capacity to yield fulfilment implying **ens naturata** and **natura naturatis**. It comprehends a ceaseless end whose pursuit is in the flow or movement of something desired and inevitable. The end is to keep the order of things in Nature undisturbed. Rain has this particular end which is to bring life into order and peace. Without rain life cannot express itself in harmony with nature. Again the word **puyal** புயல் denotes rain with its accompanying movement of clouds and wind. **Vaari** வாரி denotes downpour—a movement downwards—and implying the desire to bestow some from of blessing. It is a merciful and benevolent action of Nature bringing to mind the words of Shakespeare:

> "The quality of mercy is not strained:
> It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
> Upon the place beneath."

15) கெடுப்பதூஉம் கெட்டார்க்குச் சார்வாய்மற் றாங்கே
யெடுப்பதூஉ மெல்லா மழை.

In rain is all—evil in failure.
Fulfilment again in bestowal.
Thus. in two-fold action,
Rain both gives and takes.

Valluvar uses different words to carry the meaning of rain as the pivotal and sustaining force of life. It is only those with knowledge of the nuances of Tamil who can understand the shades of meaning in the synonyms for rain used by Valluvar. In this Chapter the use of such words as **Vaan** வான், **Visumbu** விசும்பு, **Vinn** விண், புயல், **Elizhil,** எழிலி and **Malhai** மழை have their own specific applications and connotations which are not readily translatable into English.

In this Kural the word **Malhai** மழை meaning rainfall seeks to emphasise the act of downpour. It is something awaited and welcome because it is a counterpose to the opposite situation where absence of rain causes ruin and devastation. There is a factor beyond man's ingenuity in the workings of Nature and Valluvar is seeking to draw attention to it despite the fact that it is intermingled with good and evil.

Where Valluvar's God in the first Chapter is beyond good and evil, here in created things we are presented with an involvement in and dependence on the qualities. Valluvar sees a majestic instability in Nature's working, an unstable coherence in the lack of order where Nature works her course. There is something inscrutable in the destiny of man which has to be figured out by man himself.

16) விசும்பிற் றுளிவீழி னல்லான் மற்றாங்கே
பசும்புற் றலைகாண் பதரிது.

If rain-drops from the sky
Fail indeed to come,
Even grass its greenery
Will not display.

Grass is perhaps the most simple and elementary vegetation. Its failure therefore to show its life—expressive colour reveals how much rain is looked forward to by life in all its myriad other varieties.

The word துளி Thuli means a drop which is sufficient perhaps for a single blade of grass to show its life-like form. That single drop itself is the work of a force higher than man.

There is something inscrutable in the working of Nature, but rain in tradition is associated with righteousness on earth. If kingly duties fail. rains too fail. This time-tested truth to which Valluvar bears witness is brought out again under Chapter 56 dealing with unrighteous rulers (Kural 559).

முறைகோடி மன்னவன் செய்யின் உறைகோடி
ஒல்லாது வானம் பெயல்

The intermingling of heaven and earth has something outside the realms of man's thinking which Valluvar, in line with the great primordial Traditions, sought to underline.

17) நெடுங்கடலுந் தண்ணீர்மை குன்றுந்தடிந் தெழிலி
தானல்கா தாகிவிடின்

Where waters taken above
To the seas fail to return,
The vast oceans themselves
Their natural State will lose.

This **Kural** in another way brings to focus the cyclic pattern existing between sky and earth. Here is stated a cosmological arrangement which, if it is disturbed, becomes a privation of due form— rather a defect of beauty in Nature. Valluvar, in line with Tradition, is full of the idea of moving men to truth to make it bear upon them.

There is an unobtrusive beauty in this **Kural** which takes us away from any mechanical adherence to the pedantic or academic. A doctrine is conveyed out of all that the modern scientific mind would think of as being only part of Nature's mechanism.

The word எழிலி used here for sky is communicative of something taken from below but not belonging to it. The sea is the cause of rain in as much as rain has become cause of the sea.

18) சிறப்போடு பூசனை செல்லாது வானம்
வறக்குமேல் வானோர்க்கு மீண்டு.

> Earthly ceremonies to heavenly Beings,
> Their glory and pomp
> All do suffer,
> Where the sky in duty doth fail.

For those afflicted by modern and Western—oriented education for whom knowledge is meaningless where it is not empirical, this **Kural** would convey little meaning.

Valluvar was not concerned with the pursuit merely of functional and economic determinism. He knew the two worlds clearly—the functional and significant, the utilitarian and spiritual as well as the physical and metaphysical. His concepts have a bearing on eternal values and his reasons were born of Eternal wisdom. On levels of reference higher than the empirical, Valluvar knew that man is not merely an entity by himself and that the spirit behind him has animated reference to other forces outside his limitations.

Offerings and ceremonies sanctioned in Tradition have always had and in many instances even now have a rite which, being sacred, involved a religious activity. It can thus be said that man plays a harp which can be both human and celestial. In the words of Plato (Timaeus, 90,A) "We are not an earthly, but a heavenly plant—up from earth towards our kindred in heaven". In the whole of Saiva mystical poetry, offerings to the Devas and other spirits **(pithir)** have been found vital and essential

since these did elevate men through expression of the very sense of gratitude for all that life on earth has given as material and physical fulfilment.

Offerings are of those only which Nature has given for man's growth, continuance and fulfilment because life itself is a continuing process. Valluvar follows the path of affirmation—the **via affirmativa**— distinct from the **via negativa**.

19) தானந்தவமிரண்டுந் தங்கா வியனுலகம்
வானம் வழங்கா தெனின்.

Charity, self—surrender,
These twain last not,
If sky, its gift of rain
Doth not give.

Valluvar here dwells on what was essentially the Tamil Tradition wherr the call was understood that self—interest had to be surrendered if the social order was to be maintained. This enabled charity in the sense of love and self—surrender to be understood as the goal of life.

The **Kural** here begins the interlinking of Nature's way of sustaining life side by side with man's own tasks of charity which accompany self—realisation. Without self—surrender there cannot be any Charity in the sense used, for example, by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians. Nature has this way too which is that of taking with one hand and bestowing in return evenly and with both hands. What is taken as unseen from the earth is returned evenly and gently as rain. It can even be compared symbolically to the movements of the heart or to the two—fold action of breathing.

The principle behind all operations, of men as well as of Nature, is the continuance of the life process by holdin

the scales even. Vallnvar saw life in its integral whole where the intellectual and spiritual orders were entirely in line with supra—rational traditional wisdom. He placed the world at the highest level, not of profanity but of sanctity. In sanctity is everything understood and related, for Heaven is brought down to earth or conversely, the earth is taken up to heaven—உலகம் என்பது உயர்ந்தோர் மாட்டே. The world therefore belongs to those who have risen above—above the level of profanities—where thought is concerned all the time to raise the stature of men, their perceptions and knowledge of things.

It has to be said today that Western sciences and their industrial applications have caused chaos, disorder, inequality and poverty on a scale never before known. In proportion to the growth of industry is visible the growth of inequality and poverty. Valluvar's social and economic theories were heaven—directed which thereby were able to set up a goal and purpose and which would **ipso facto** eliminate ceaseless desire as well as acquisitiveness whilst promoting indivipual and collective effort. Labour in Tradition was not regulated by time schedules becauso work for every man was a vocation.

Man today has to escape the limitations of externally stimulated desires and the incoherence that arises out of being alienated from Nature and the universe. That is why Valluvar brings to focus the linking of man and sky which represents the meeting of the temporal and ephemeral with the spiritual or divinely ordained.

For Valiuvar it is the form of man totally identified with Nature which essentially makes for inner understanding and realisation and this Chapter வான் சிறப்பு leads to such a fulfilment. This can be seen throughout the remaining chapters of Thiru—Kural.

20) நீரின் றமையா துலகெனின் யார்யார்க்கும்
வானின் றமையா தொழுக்கு
Duties and actions here
From water do flow;
So, without sky,
Duties become unco - ordinate.

Man's actions or functions (ஒழுக்கம்) spring from water as essential pre - requisite, Conversely, functions which seek to ignore the vital role of water in life also ignore a principle belonging to a higher order. Here Heaven becomes part of the earth; no room is therefore given for pretexts which would turn the earth away from heaven merely for the sake of gaining possession of the earth. Valluvar's knowledge of things was significant and all—comprehending. It was, therefore, neither aimless nor unregulated because it remained at the opposite pole of dispersion in pure multiplicity.

One sees the materialistic outlook of today leading all the time and more to dispersion in pure multiplicity. The more **Kural** is understood and related to the social order, the more it elevates because there is no offence to man as a divine being on the path of liberation. **Kural** has different values from all modern writings which spring from several limitations. Valluvar cannot be judged easily and on the surface for he transcends every limitation of thinking and action. Modern writing stands condemned even more in the light of the Gospel. "Offence must needs come, but woe unto him through whom offence cometh."

Water is one of the elements but its never—ceasing flow has a relationship to man's duties. Unless it is so related there is produced a disharmony. Life proceeds through use of the natural conditions as a means to its own existence and the sky provides the clue to the inter—

linking of nature and man. Duties of should not conflict with this natural condition and most of modern man's actions are perverse because they lack this interlinking. Nature provides a lesson to understanding the collective psyche in which there is rhythm and uniformity such as would enable communication with nature as a whole.

That next to the Chapter in praise of God, Valluvar should have given attention to the earth's inter—relationship with the sky shows how, in the sequence of things, he placed the relativity of time and space on earth with a cosmological pattern where one subserves the other. There is no de—linking of man with the creation around especially with the sky from which all the sustenance for existence is derived.

Water links the sky and earth and it calls for revolutionary thinking to know how impenetrable the order is which connects man with the universe around.

CHAPTER III

ON GREATNESS OF RENUNCIATION

Valluvar's precursor who gave extensive interpretation to what had always remained the substance of man's goal—(renunciation from the afflictions of desire and involvement in dualities) — has put it pithily:

திளைக்கும் வினைக்கடல் தீர்வுறு தோணி
இளைப்பினை நீக்கும் இருவழியுண்டு
கிளைக்கும் தனக்கும் அக்கேடில் புகழோன்
விளைக்கும் தவம் அறம் மேற்றுணையாமே.

(Thirumanthiram — 258)

"Over the foaming, restless Ocean of the Dualities
We cross as in a boat to secure torment's end.
The journey's weariness to cast away

Path two - fold there is.
To kindred and kinsmen both alike
Glory there is in that struggle,
Self - abnegation and surrender —
Aram and Thavam —
They only support
And sweeten journey's course,

The concept of kindred (கிளை) in Tamil poetry is that of the links that one forms through the sequence called birth. Birth is a recurrence, which follows a chartered course and each phase brings with it associates and companion ship, One's self (தாள்) elevates both kinsmen and associates (கிளை). This is what makes the goal of self — realisation possible and the elevation is not merely for oneself but also for kinsmen and associates (தொல் பசுக்குளாங்கள்).

In this chapter Valluvar follows a descending order from God to sky and thence to the highest point for man's endeavour on earth which is the greatness of those who have pursued that endeavour (நீத்தார் பெருமை) These are people who have passed beyond the individuality into the all—pervading and universal. They alone prepare all creatures to return to the Centre of their Being which is God.

21) ஒழுக்கத்து நீத்தார் பெருமை விழுப்பத்து
வேண்டும் பனுவல் துணிவு.

Those who in Liberation
Have social action abandoned,
All desired works—the scriptures—
Have as highest reference

Comprehension of this **Kural** is difficult unless one has reached the state of certainty in understanding the meaning and purpose of renunciation. Just as the sun must

burst forth when the air is bright, so does renunciation of action takes place in the being when one has escaped time and space limitation,

It is as Eckhart would say to "see all things in all their dimensions apart from time and space as the single object of its vision". *There is no longer any dependence on economics but an involvement in work with the intention of the work's first cause. The final state of liberation is outside the norms of day—to—day living. Works of the kind hitherto done have to be abandoned altogether if one is to find God and learn to have Him in one's works.

Life's work is also to go beyond the vocational into that which is felt and communicated in man's whole being. There is no glimpse but a totality of perception where there is no claim to anything so that ultimately action is surrendered to the Divine Power. Again in Eckhart's own words, "Heaven does more than the carpenter who builds a house". *

Good writing desires the one end which is **gnana** or wisdom which cannot be measured out into fragments. It is also 'hidden' from everything, even from vocation, being tantamount to "**in principio**". Valluvar conceives of a "**solus ante principium**" in which there are no contingent aspects of distinction in a life evolved out of vocation and beyond it to the one and only Reality.

In subsequent **Kurals** Valluvar gives detailed and profound interpretation of social life and behaviour but here at the peak of man's growth and development, social action is abandoned. At this point one can no longer allow oneself to be shut up in the dismal cave of functional

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* "Eckhart's view of Art"— P. 93.
* "Echart's view of Art" P. 209.

and economic determinism. To be caught in worldly activity all the time is to be at the mercy of one's thoughts and corresponding desires.

The cult of individualism which is the bane of modern societies did not find a place in Valluvar's society and thus **Kural** may be said to point the way for the rest of the world to follow.

All writing in that sense had to have reference only to a peak of growth and endeavour and this idea is clearly emphasised by Valluvar. That was also the norm laid down by the Sangams for judgment of poetic writing and their approval for public circulation.

Life wants all the time to flow down into the depths though the mind tends to distract. It is the mind which is caught up in the currents of the modern world producing the neurotic and the wooden Philistine. They can never enjoy the past nor carry it into the ever - present. The current that submerges is the collective mentality. As age grows people today will not want to bid farewell to life because the childish continues to persist and grow.

The longevity of today has no meaning for the species though the 'growth' of medical science seems to have provided for it boastfully. To extend life beyond the bounds of life whilst retaining one's childish egoism is catastrophic and that is the fate of the modern world. The inability to drain the whole cup with grace is a shrinking back. No one wants to know the truth because every truth arising out of scientific and commercial thinking in time becomes stale and trite.

Where the call is to renounce from action as in this **Kural** is also to escape from the crumbling dust. The spark generated through realisation burns to cinder all shapes

worn thin by time. This Chapter deals with those who, in the struggle to liberate, have found Truth alone valid which in the end bears witness to new images.

The Tamil people should know that, where growth is, there are roots as well. Growth has to be both upwards and downwards and no tree ever can disown its dark roots. In the state of renunciation is the goal of maturity. It is the state attained by maturer people who, having passed the meridian of life, are the only ones capable of creating culture. C. C. Jung has given expression to this clearly:. "Money—making, social achievement, family and posterity are nothing but plain nature, not culture. Culture lies outside the purpose of nature ".‡

The cultured beings are the truly liberated and they indeed are the salt of the earth. The tragedy that Jung points out is that modern humanity lacks both civilization and culture and that which goes as 'civilization' is the mindless destruction of the old values.

22) துறந்தார் பெருமை துணைக்கூறின் வையத்
திறந்தாரை எண்ணிக்கொண் டற்று.

Immeasurable as counting
The dead who have gone before
Is the greatness
Of those who have renounced.

The greatness of renunciation is beyond standards of measurement, assessment and the like. No evaluation is possible because renunciation is outside three—dimensional perceptions. The meaning in things illuminated cannot be passed down for judgment on profane levels.

‡ (page 147 "Psychological Reflections").

Hermes tells his son Asclepins, "I am not now the man I was; I have been born again in Mind ...... I am no longer an object coloured and tangible; a thing of spatial dimensions; I am now alien to all this and the all that you perceive when you gaze with bodily eyesight. To such eyes as yours, my son, I am not now visible". * The omni - consciousness of the sage of settled understanding flows only into the psyche of the living—into a soul bound to a body (கடவுள்). Valluvar points to the peak—an apex which is the end of a preceding ascent.

The raising of the general level of consciousness is possible only here, in life on earth, where the opposites are in constant conflict. The sage has found the centre—the **mysterium coniunctionis** as Jung would call it. The soul attains wholeness here because there is a continuity of consciousness.

From the focal point of the ego is only produced an enigmatic world of obscurity. As C. G. Jung would say, "unconscious wholeness seems to me the true **spiritus rector** of all biological and psychic events". The sage of Valluvar is the only one who can kindle light in the darkness of mere being because the destiny of man is to create more and more consciousness.

Valluvar refers to the sage as a special and distinct category from whom alone the greatness of things can be judged. The world has many things which are great and to measure this greatness it is necessary to use the yard-stick of the "Sage of settled understanding".

23) இருமை வகை தெரிந் தீண்டறம் பூண்டார்
பெருமை பிறங்கிற் றுலகு.

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* ("Oriental Philosophy of Art" — Ananda Coomaraswamy, pages 120—121)

Germinating seed indeed he is
Of Heavenly harvest—
The Sage who of birth and liberation
Knows the goal.

Here Valluvar's outlook embraces a cosmology because he is no purveyar of time—bound or commercial values. The Sage means something higher than empirical. Birth is not accepted as mere subservience to time and space and it is only the Sage who knows the significance of life and liberation.

The sage is above birth and death because he is a liberated being. He experiences the state of non-being and is outside the pull of the dulaities. Hence the greatness, if ever, of the world belongs only to him.

The succession of birth and death is an endless continuity — a wheel rolling all the time without a goal. Here the sage represents the goal in an evolutionary cosmogony. The sage gives to a static universe whilst giving a fulfilment and goal to man. Valluvar presents a psychology not in any sense wooden or petrified but dynamic and purposeful. The greatness, if ever, of the world, is the greatness only of the sage. He does not belong to a three — dimensional existence because his liberation is from the burden of the body to the limitlessness of the unconscious.

As C. G. Jung would explain "the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being".‡

24. உரனென்னுந் தோட்டியான் ஓரைந்துங் காப்பான்
வரனென்னும் வைப்பிற்கோர் வித்து.

‡ (P. 326 "Memories, Dreams and Reflections.")

He indeed is seed wherein springs
The highest Heaven
Who like unto the elephant's goad,
Controls and guides the five senses.

The five senses left to themselves always tend to turn towards sense objects. This means misdirection and dissipation of energy where everything becomes limited both spatially and spiritually. For a person who escapes the limitation of sense, life becomes only a segment of the larger experience and existence. Those tied up on the other hand with sense limitations only create for themselves a three-dimensional box—like universe filled with surface experiences and stock responses. Outside the narrowness of relativity, there is a Self which endures outside the currency of life and time.

The sages have a continuity because they do not yield to the play of opposites either of good or evil, right or wroing. They have shown that man has a life far beyond the bounds of consciousness. As Jung has pointed out, under the domination of "over-valued reasons, the individual is pauperised and this is what has really happened to modern man" †

In the clash of opposites which earthly existence offers there is a raising of the general level of consciousness. At the point reached by the sage there is redemption from the clash in which is implied the only liberation for man. The Sage perfected the goad which controls the divisive activities of the senses and thus to strip from himself the world to find the meaning within himself of the Truth that lies outside a three-dimensional world. Jung was right when he observed: "As far as we can discern, the sole

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† (P.302-"Memories, Dreams and Reflections".)

purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being." ‡

25) ஐந்தவித்தானாற்றல் அகல்விசும்பு ளார்கோமான்
இந்திரனே சாலுங் கரி.

Witness, indeed, is Indra,
Lord of Heavenly Hosts,
To might of him who
Sense directions five hath scorched.

The context of **this Kural** which embraces a mythology conveys the admonition that even the Lord of the Heavenly Hosts, namely Indira, had to subject himself to the Eternal Law which is that the conquest of the self is the goal of endeavour. Indiran paid for his detraction. It was indeed a physical distortion visible and ugly to the view.

Even the heavenly order can become disfigured where the norms are violated. Love is transcendent and immanent but lust becomes an aberration when it loses its involvement in self-surrender. Here the chastity of **Ahalikai,** wife of the sage Gauthama, was deceitfully violated by Indiran. The curse of the sage was duly visited on Indiran which made the latter deformed and in every sense unbecoming of the manly figure he had been.

Incest has often been associated with royalty and divinities as being a prerogative. But, if the psyche is to be understood, the door has to be opened to let the light in. In this **Kural** Valluvar clears the way for true enlightenment whilst doing away with false concepts even belonging to 'divine' beings. Those of us who are victims of the psychic dichotomy of our time, may miss the meaning of Valluvar just because he has brought in a traditional myth to develop and emphasise the significance of true

‡ (P. 326–"Memories, Dreams and Reflections".)

renunciation. The sage not merely transcends time and space but also the so-called heavenly order. A mythological situation does indeed arise in the struggle between light and darkness. Valluvar was conscious of his archetypal theme whilst moving into a mythological background.

26) செயற்கரிய செய்வார் பெரியர் சிறியர்
செயற்கரிய செய்கலாதார்.

To the great alone
Do belong rare deeds;
The lesser breed are unfit indeed
For mighty tasks.

In this is brought out the important contrast between the small and the great. In the latter category are the sages who suppress their impulses to achieve inner harmony and which surpasses all else

There are two poles—one which presents in no unmistakable terms the ugliness and meaninglessness of human life, the other which brings out the spiritual and numinous meaning behind man's psyche. The higher the endeavour and growth of the being, the greater the consciousness. This in turn leads to the need to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being.

As between darkness and light is the struggle and Valluvar here brings out the strong contrast between the humans who matter and those who do not.

Today in the concept of civilization everything takes shape as human in the ordinary, profane sense. This has brought to the surface all the inferior possibilities of mankind under the term 'rationalism', leading to the inclusion of concepts which apply to the senses merely. For 'truth' has been substituted 'utility'.

The understanding of செயற்கரிய is possible only in the context of நீத்தார் பெருமை. It is the achievement of the sage which is supreme and valuable. Valluvar lays the norm for all human activity — the understanding of which becomes possible only in the context of the entire exposition contained in **Kural** dealing with life, government, social structure, individual and collective behaviour, etc.

27) சுவையொளி யூறோசை நாற்றமென் றைந்தின்
வகைதெரிவான் கட்டே யுலகு.

To him alone the world belongs
Who the nature knows
Of taste, sight, touch
Sound and smell.

Valluvar penetrates here the secret of the human personality. In the same way as in physics energy is spoken of in terms of heat, light, sound, electricity, etc, so in the human personality are various energic processes similar to the phyicist's concepts. In terms of psychology 'the psyche is transformed or developed by the relationship of the ego to the contents of the unconcious'. The five sense perceptions have their own specific functions of relating man, in the first instance, to his existence and then to the corporeal world, These are consciously felt elements through the psyche remains the ultimate witness underlying the unconscious.

The senses have their individual and collective functions. Individually they pull man towards experience of the dualities and involvement, mostly detrimentally, in them. Through ear we perceive sounds; by palate, tastes; by nose, odours and by touch, diverse dual experiences such as heat and cold, hardness and softness, roughness and smoothness etc.

There has to be proper coordination between the senses to understand things outside the individual experiences of

each. For example, the ear has to be disciplined to respond to good music and in Tamil tradition the highest point of human experience is reached only in music.

The outer actions and responses of man take him to space, motion and extension which have superficial bearings. Senation, feeling, emotion are distinct and apart and do exist except when thought of in relative contexts.

Man found his indispensable place in the great process of being and in his consciousness created what is called an objectve existence. He thus become the second creator of the world.

The sage Valluvar is one who knows the entirety of life's experiences—one who has overcome his passions having gone through their inferno. Valluvar saw clearly the light only through the sage's eyes and his other doors of perception. He saw the **mysterium coniunctionis** only through the sage who held the central secret of objective cognition.

28) நிறைமொழி மாந்தர் பெருமை நிலத்து
மறைமொழி காட்டி விடும்.

The greatness of sages
Is mirrored in their utterances.
These alone bear witness to the Abiding
In a world distraught.

Despite all 'progress', man's concept of time and space bear only approximate validity, what with rationalism and doctrinairism being the diseases that they are.

The sage represents the Truth as it is hidden beyond words. This is exemplified in the Tiru - murais of which the Tamil language offers a vast repertoire—utterances of

mystics such as Manikkavasagar, Sambanthar, Appar and Tiru - navukkarasar.

The world conveys a different meaning to the sage. For those whose interest in things is only on the profane level as the modern world is constituted, Thirumoolar brings out the sharp contrast ;

அடப்பண்ணி வைத்தார் அடிசிலை உண்டார்
மடக்கொடியாரொடு மந்தணங் கொண்டார்
இடப்பக்கமே யிறை நொந்தது என்றார்
கிடைக்கப் படுத்தார் கிடந்தொழிந்தாரே (148)

"The rich repast he dined in joy
In amorous dalliance sweet damsels hugged.
Sudden he moaned, 'Oh, it pains my left!'
Thus ended he all as dust to dust.

Example can be seen in the modern world despite all the sort of 'progress' made scientifically. Its history can be viewed in a dispassionate sense as an immense panorama of futility and anarchy. The search of modern man is pointless as that brought out by T. S. Eliot in "Prufrock".

"Let us go, through certain half—deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one—night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster—shells :
Like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question."

The triviality in all things is brought out in the imagery : "I have measured out my life with coffee-spoons".

The sage represents the peak of man's evolution. He offers the only goal which the superiority of contemplation

can provide. He shows that the unchanging is superior to change especially where the latter is at the sacrifice of the essence. Materialism means change but accompanied by strife which is the result of failue to grasp and understand universal principles. The wisdom of the sage is supra—natural and belongs to *pure intelligence. It has no reference to the* unceasing flux of things of the senses which in the modern world is responsible for the disintegration and dissolution of all possible knowledge.

The parallelism of events in modern societies has created what is called in psychology a **dementia praecox** (schizophrenia). The sick psyche was almost wholly unknown in traditional societies directed by sages of settled understanding. The modern world offers no room for நிறை மொழி மாந்தர் which is indeed its greatest indictment.

29) குணமென்னும் குன்றேறி நின்றார் வெகுளி
கணமேயும் காத்தல் அரிது.

Those who the peak have ascended
Of highest wisdom —
Their anger at detraction
None can resist.

The sage of settled understanding is above the twin pairs of opposites. At the peak where he is, thought is undisturbed by the fluctuating impulses of a world ensnared by relative afflictions, desires and conflicts.

The sage has grasped the meaning of existence and that meaning alone makes a great many things endurable.

All things are possible in the fullest meaning of God as a **complexio oppositorum** which he is pledged to guard. Nothing should interfere with a task that is his because he is neither blind, lame nor deformed. None need offer him a home for the aged because he has rejected props

and clutches. His path is the only way of the Self and he has found it, having united his own multiplicity for a common action. He is engaged in a cosmic war as Thiruvasagam puts in திருப்படை எழுச்சி and திருப்படைஆட்சி.

He has taken his role seriously and not surrendered it to any undifferentiated collectivity. Neither caprice nor arrogance motivates him. Driven by his **daimon**, he has sallied on a path where no conflicts occur. In his own making, he is superior to the individual. He is the living testimony to the freedom to choose the power outside the pulls of the dualities — the freedom outside even truth and error. His charity bears and endures all things but his anger, very rare indeed, as Valluvar says can be devastating because it is neither momentary nor fleeting.

30) அந்தணர் என்போர் அறவோர்மற் றெவ்வுயிர்க்குஞ்
செந்தண்மை பூண்டொழுக லான்.

They indeed are **Anthanar**
Whose love all life doth embrace—
Their surrender is total
Their love supreme.

With this ends the chapter on the sage thus bringing to focus the supremacy of Love.

The closest meaning to this concept of love or charity is brought out in I Corinthians 13 : 7. The sage's love is cosmogonic and transcendental. It is the whole of his unified and undivided make-up. Through love he "beareth all things, endureth all things, suffereth all things".

CHAPTER IV

அறன் வலியுறுத்தல்

THE POWER OF ARAM STRESSED

31) சிறப்பீனுஞ் செல்வமும் ஈனும் அறத்தினூ உங்
காக்கம் எவனோ உயிர்க்கு.

What benevolent bestowal doth life receive
Than **Aram**, the fount of all —
Wealth and honour it only is,
And what else can life seek ?

The word **Aram** அறம் in Tamil has a **distinctive** connotation, in a way different from the **Sanskrit** '**Dharma**' so commonly substituted for it. **It** embraces a universal and permanent code of reference for human conduct as distinct from the more modern concept of legal sanction arising from written laws. The sanction of **aram** is inner and divine unlike modern legal processes which reflect only gross perceptions of good and evil. **Aram** is a transcendent and immanent principle, the violation of which harms the whole human order. Modern laws multiply as evil multiplies since they are a reflection of that evil but **aram** enunciates transcending principles which keep mankind on an ordered and purposive goal.

Aram implies imperatives that arise from inner realisation stripped of the dualities. Thus it becomes a voice from within—a call to action where humanity is no longer degraded or debased. It is a collective and divine principle understood and responded to deeply and intimately. It is the opposite of ignorance because it sheds the light through reflection and understanding. It is different because it does not create division or fragmentation in the fields of thinking and action.

In the order in which Valluvar proceeds to expound the **philosophia perennis** and arising therefrom the

most vital social, economic and political theories, **aram** takes precedence. In the order of values as purely applicable and belonging to the human order, **aram** is first after God, the firmament and the sage.

The Tamil letter 'அ' which begins Kural, as signifying the **Primordial Being**, continues here in அறம் as The Law that governs man—the violation of which places man out of focus in the creative Design.

32) அறத்தினூஉங் காக்கமும் இல்லை அதனை
மறத்தலின் ஊங்கில்லை கேடு

Nothing suffices than **Aram**
Beyond it nothing more ennobling.
In forgetting it
Nothing indeed more evil.

The word **aram** அறம் is the totality of what can be called a transforming principle where life is understood as a sacred undertaking. It is intimately connected with the divine and redeeming principle and therefore presents to view what can be the upper limit of knowledge.

Aram is an ever - enduring resource of memory and failure thereof condemns man to evil. Memory should not be allowed to fail in man because that which stays with it is the abiding. **Aram** is abiding in the sense that it is the support of all action and thought in the truly affirmative sense.

Many commentators have co-related **Aram** with the Sanskrit Dharma which is where the meaning given to it by Valluvar becomes all the more relevant. There is a distinct connotation **Aram** carries which Dharma does not. Dharma has today degenerated into some form of impulsive action but Valluvar look **Aram** to be the very source and strength of action at every level including the social and

economic. Here he stresses the imperative so that the meaning and application become clearer as the rest of the Chapters unfold. வலியுறுத்தல் means an imperative that, under any circumstances, cannot be ignored.

It is from this Chapter onwards that Valluvar brings out an ordered presentation of life through the vicissitudes of what are social, economic and political to the ultimate end in Liberation.

Aram takes us to the great territory of the self, into the wholeness called life wherein conflicts and contradictions do not exist. It presents a picture here on earth in which it was shown by the ancient Tamils that life was not a passing futility or folly and that the psyche can function outside the spatio - temporal law of causality.

The idea of forgetting or failure of memory is not permitted in அறம். In the same way that birth is a failure of memory bringing about recurrence in birth until memory is restored, so too அறம் creates the awareness called remembering where birth and death do not occur.

அடிமறக்குமாறிலாக என்னை மையல் செய்திம் மண்ணின் மேல்
பிறக்குமாறு காட்டினாய்
பிணிப்படும் உடம்பைவிட்டிறக்குமாறு காட்டினாய்
இழுக்கு கின்றதென்னையே.

- is the refrain of the Saiva mystic Gnana—Sambandar.

Kural deals with the three categories of action which are proved here as being imperatives -**Aram**, **Porul**, **Inpam**. The whole of **Kural** becomes by definition முப்பால் Muppal in which wealth and love take distinctive meaning along with **Aram**. Thus life becomes a totality and fullness of experience.

33) ஒல்லும் வகையான் அறவினை ஓவாதே
செல்லும்வாய் எல்லாஞ் செயல்.

Let Aram be done
To the extent of your ability,
Unfailingly and unremittingly
In every thought, word and deed.

Here is enjoined an importance that life's work ultimately becomes one of self - surrender and no trace of the ego is left. Consciousness of the nature, import and value of **aram** naturally leads to a life of self-surrender. Actions involving **aram** are not specified but **aram** itself involves the purification of the individual and society which are closely interlinked through purposive goals, which mark out life.

Here அறவினை is used with definite intent to make it distinct from good (நல்வினை) and bad (தீவினை) actions. **Aram** is inviolable to the extent it is not involved in the affectations of good and evil, right and wrong. It is action stripped of inclination both individual and social. Once Aram is understood no individual will want to escape from its experiences and responsibilities.

34) மனத்துக்கண் மாசிலனாதல் அனைத்தறன்
ஆகுல நீர பிற.

Aram is untainted,
No cloak hides its work.
It is in the mind alone
Uncorrupted, unsullied.

Actions that stem from **aram** are neither corrupted nor sullied. Aram does not "speak with the tongues of men and of angels" and therefore not "sounding brass or tinkling cymbal". It is there in every place where wholesomeness is found in man and society. There are no

pretentious or outward shows of charity but a way of life typically Tamilian which Valluvar emphasises.

The underlying and transforming priniciples in Aram are stated by Valluvar with patient and convincing logic throughout his Kural. **Aram** runs through **Kural** as a thread would through a chain of precious beads. It is made to accord with "the order of things as they stand in the mind of God" which is in the very hearts of men.

35) அழுக்கா றவாவெகுளி இன்னாச்சொல் நான்கும்
இழுக்கா இயன்ற தறம்.

Of four is **Aram** concerned
Malice, desire, anger and evil speech
The senses drive towards these.
Liberation therefrom is **Aram.**

There are few evils which obstruct the path of **aram** and these arise from anger, malice, desire, evil speech including thought. The pull of the senses is towards these objects which ultimately degrade man and make him incapable of functioning effectively in the social and divine order.

The authority of tradition is doctrinal hence the ideas become one as expressed and felt by the humblest peasant or the highest in the spiritual hierarchy. There is a conscience which impels action. It is present in the awareness of things and it is the recollected man, not the excited, who gives leadership. It is **aram** which has given an unaltered iconography to the Tamil over many millennia and brought out a power entirely distinguished from violence.

The consciousness of truth remains in **Aram** regardless of what happens through worldly action. **Aram** produced for the Tamil people a culture that could be

called unanimous because it served a purpose having been primarily intended to communicate a gnosis.

Desire for example involves a taste which in the modern sense becomes mostly an unwholesome taste (சுவை). It can lead one to take pleasure in deformities which modern civilisation presents on uninhabited scales. In Tamil there is judgment not based on mere sensation but rather on cognition. The concept of **aram** takes one to the knowledge of truth. It is different from modern and Western disciplines which have been responsible for promoting loose living even to the extent of exhibiting pornography as an end in itself. In Tamil tradition knowledge of metaphysical truth was not confined only to the elite — it belonged to the whole of society as a living, purposeful and enjoyable experience. That embodied the whole of **aram.**

The application of **aram** to life and society had a therapeutic value. It was able to obliterate completely the multitude of psychic contents and images. Unlike the modern craze for rationalism which has made the human alien to man, **aram** brings to being a potentiality of life. Rationalism has been over—grown by a crazy and menacing 'civilization' but **aram** provides an archetypal experience lingering with memory, A**ram** activates a form of magic coercion which the counterparts is modern regimentation can never come near.

36) அன்றறிவாம் என்று தறஞ்செய்க மற்றது
பொன்றுங்கால் பொன்றுத் துணை.

Perform **Aram** here and now;
There is no tarrying another day.
It bears your safe journey along
Here and o'er other shore.

Aram implies an eternal law binding on life here and now. It lays the norms for rectification of humanity which,

in modern terms, merely "measures out its life with coffee spoons". We are to-day, in T. S. Eliot's effective imagery "like a patient etherised upon a table".

There is no postponement for another day where performance of **aram** goes Here Valluvar lays down an imperative where there can be no thought of postponement for another day. **Aram** is no theoretical concept merely, because its theory exists only in practice. Valluvar here promulgates the laws of aram as binding.

To-day the concept of **aram** has been destroyed by the Western—type universal, compulsory and even free education. To those whose intellectual capacities have been inhibited by what is commonly called "University education", the meaning has become even more remote. It may even be said that Tamil Nadu's intellectual, cultural and economic poverty should be traced to the failure to understand and apply **Aram** to life.

37) அறத்தா றிதுவென வேண்டா சிவிகை
பொறுத்தானோ டூர்ந்தா னிடை,

Distinction none there is
T'wixt palanquin rider and bearer—
Both functional, both necessary:
Still both outside **Aram**'s pale.

An important distinction is made here on the functional and activities which create distinctions. These are not to be measured in terms of **Aram**. In doing so, one is led outside reconciliation into the pale of conflicts which do not belong to **aram.**

There are two extreme ends presented—the mental and spiritual as against the purely physical · The bearer of a palanquin has a specific manual task which cannot equate him with the rider who generally is a King, Minister, Poet or Mystic. The duties and functions, the aptitudes and

attitudes as well as the disciplines demarcate these two distinctive characteristics.

Valluvar brings this out so that there is no confusion of planes of reference where **aram** goes. Hence no one dominates just as where the water boils and the kettle sings. There is response of one to the other—each in its own place. The collective situation is balanced and what is needed is a little introspection. In the light of **aram**, the problem of opposites of good and evil, of mind and matter, of light and darkness does not present a dichotomy. The moment we tear ourselves from the roots of **aram**, we only plunge down the cataract of 'progress' both disconnected and uprooted.

Valluvar cautions against hasty conclusions based on comparisons such as would to-day emerge out of modern ideas and innovations of a time- saving nature. Valluvar presents a harmony out of the ephemeral conditions of the present. He also saw life in the round, all the time coming into being and passing out but **Aram** continues to be the permanent hope of sunrise in the midst of every darkness and gloom that man's perceptions are capable of.

38) வீழ்நாள் படா அமை நன்றாற்றின் அஃதொருவன்
வாழ்நாள் வழியடைக்குங் கல்.

That alone blocks the way of rebirth,
Of recurrence which makes birth inevitable
Where Aram alone fills
Life's vacant hours.

Here the concept of **aram** is taken to mean the end of birth where the individual is not robbed of his roots. Unless **aram** replaces guided instincts, man becomes merely a particle in the mass and he is left in Eliot's words:

"When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherised upon a table."

There is in **Aram** a content of absorbing purpose where life becomes expressive and all - comprehending. The way of re-birth is the way taken by ignorance but in liberation there is no pull down to lower levels where the dualities only function. **In aram is** a kind of uterus of spiritual renewal in which the progress is towards distinctiveness.

Aram fills all, thus taking away time - based concepts of birth and death. It is the totality of the self becomeing both the centre and the circumference embracing both the conscious and unconscious. For that fateful combination which one may call individuality, **aram** becomes the goal.

Aram is powerful enough to block re - birth where there is only primeval and perilous sameness. The sameness is found also in the pairs of opposites such us time and space, good and evil, beauty and ugliness as well as difference and sameness.‡ As Jung would say, "We are victims of the pairs of opposites. The pleroma is rent in us".

39) அறத்தான் வருவதே இன்பமற் றெல்லாம்
புறத்த புகழும் இல.

In Aram alone is bliss,
All else sought as happiness,
To misery only lead;
Neither bring they glory.

The endless pursuit of satisfaction yielding to pleasure. as an end in itself is characteristic of modern life. The result is the externalisation of pleasure leading to the insane

‡ (Pa. 381 "Psychological Reflections".)

pursuit of common - places and misapplied truisms. People revel themselves in almost all modern languages on shop-soiled platitudes and the cliche's from newspapers, novels, T. V. and the like. We witness a sick civilization struggling against the death - pangs of its own annihilation.

Valluvar speaks of happiness as being derived only from **aram.** It presupposed a discipline and way of life which liberates both the individual and the society. In fact the whole compass of Tamil life at the social and religious levels as portrayed by Valluvar underscored the basis of **aram** as the only way of fulfilment and liberation for man.

40) செயற்பால தோரும் அறனே ஒருவற்
குயற்பால தோரும் பழி.

Aram alone is worthy pursuit.
In evil lies its negation —
The detestable is there shown.
In Aram alone is right action.

The problem of good and evil, right and wrong action have been reconciled in the single application of **aram** to man's life. With childlike naivette we often fail to distinguish the nature of good and evil. In the substratum of man's existence in the frequent conflict of good and evil. In **aram** there is an unification of action and feeling which leaves little room for any conflict to arise. It provides for a cohesion in the individual and the collective personality of an ideal which reinforces him even in the isolation of individual aims and prevents him from being motivated by caprice or arrogance.

He is driven in other words by his **daimon** to action which conveys the fullest meaning to his individual personality without conflicts with the progress of others. There is awareness of a movement forward and the ego

becomes less ambivalent and assertive. In **aram** life is freed from entanglement in the dichotomies because it throws open the doors to freedom.

CHAPTER - V

இல்லறவியல்

ON THE DOMESTIC STATE

A part of the evolutionary and natural state of life of the Tamil people was that pertaining to the household from which radiated all that signified of **Aram**. The house (இல்) was the centre of love and self—surrender and through it new generations sprang which, from cradle to grave, practised the virtues of **aram**. Children were never permitted to grow in the manner they are to—day-products of a perverted individualism. They were not subject to just a humanistic philosophy where they would merely become victims of their thoughts and corresponding desires, without grasping the ultimate goal of Love. Love, in the Tamil sense, encompasses all that can be called life and its divine purpose. The constitution of the home as part of the unit called **Ur** ஊர் was to extend love to all who belonged to it.

The house (இல்) was an indispensable unit denoting roof (protection) and off—spring. Without protection against hunger and want, the house becomes a selfish unit. In the Tamil Tradition each village was a self-supporting unit and the house, with provision for the way-farer as well as for education, prevented extravagent consumption through dedication to the format. The culture behind the houshold was entirely based on self—surrender. There was no worship of the "yellow slave" called gold which, in the words of Shakespeare,

"place thieves,
And give them title, honour and approbation,
With senators on the bench"
("Timon of Athens")

The married state of householder was a fulfilment in social and religious duties. Further, human relationship in tradition led to the world of the psyche which is the ntermediate realm between sense aud spirit.

The tradition called for the giving way of self-assertion toself-realisation. In the household state the ego is excluded but, where it appears, it has to exclude the collective element because it is rapacious and anarchic. Psychologists such as Jung would therefore call for strengthening of the social personality as one of the essential conditions for man's existence. In the state of householder is the most appropriate and perhaps only condition for the uniform regulation of life based on a uniform distribution of happiness.

It is good to note that it is naked egoism which makes the modern industrial—commercial man out of whom grew the European man. It is the latter who ushered in the period of naked colonialism which destroyed in great measure the great Tamil Tradition.

The fields of science, on the other hand opened vistas for a purely materialistic world. These have grown in terms of specialisation. In the differentiation there has been a sinking down to specialist levels. As an end in itself science has worked great harm to the human personality. The vast majority who benefit by science have been drawn down to the lower world of the instincts being unable to stand up to a judgment of themselves.

In the pivotal position of the housholder, the Tamil tradition upholds a dignity in life. It is one of partici-

pation, both in giving and accepting. Here everyone comes to terms with a Truth higher than his or her own narrow perceptions. There is a calling in the state of householder and even more an inescapable cure against all that one can call evil in society or in the relationship of man to himself. In it is the love of one's Self in the love of one's neighbour. Selfishness, a modern aberration, is a one-sidedness where the lions of greed tear at each other.

The ego-centered life of modern man naturally cannot accept the ultimate perfectibility realised and applied in the Tamil Tradition. Until it is known that there is a spiritual authority transcending the ego - hood, the duties of householder will remain a confused picture to the modern mind.

The way of self - assertion which is that of greed is never found in Tamil settlements called **Ur**. These were distinctively called by the separate and necessary functions though ultimately to make self-surrender possible—hence, the **sathiram** (சத்திரம்) **savadi** (சாவடி) and **ambalam** (அம்பலம்). The **Sathiram** was for the detached way-farer who had abjured home life, the **Savadi** or frontal extension of the dwelling house was for the way - farer for refuge, rest and food. These also served as primary schools for children. The **ambalam** (அம்பலம்) was for those who took to the life of voluntary poverty.

Valluvar emphasised the way of **Aram** and the unit of settlement called **Ur** was designed to make the ideals of **aram** possible. **Aram** means the household life, says Valluvar - *(அறனெனப்பட்டதே இல்வாழ்க்கை)* -thus giving emphasis to the deep-rooted functions of the householder. The latter was support and substance of a way of life which gave practical meaning to **aram** as an all-pervasive thing. Without **aram** there was no life for the Tamil man since it would strip him of a total way of life which was one of surrender of self - interest. How evident is the

lack of **aram** in contemporary life can be seen in all the poverty, wretchedness and greed which have taken hold of the Tamilian life of to-day. The influence of the West, the greed and avarice generated by Western industry and commerce, among others, have played havoc with the values long established of a people whose experiences stretched to many millennia before modern 'civilization' took root.

In the Tamil household life were inculcated and radiated 'பண்பு' culture and 'பயன்' 'gainful result' because they reflected love 'அன்பு' and **Aram** as the substance and goal of endeavour:

அன்பும் அறனும் உடைத்தாயின் இல்வாழ்க்கை
பண்பும் பயனும் அது.

Aram conveys another meaning 'பொருதுமையுணர்வால் பகிர்தல்'. It reflects a feeling for all else thus calling for immense self - surrender. Even food implied a sharing and partaking and no householder would eat without sharing his food with the needy—a practice called பாத்துண்ணல். There was an innate fear of violation (பழி) meaning of **aram**.

Marriage in Tamil tradition implies the reaching out towards the fulfilment of **Aram**. Thus Valluvar gives special attention to the family as a unit to attain the ends which were apart from individual interest where the home இல் is projected into the settlement or குடி and there is perfect inter-relationship and mutual dependence. The concept of **Aram** is understood and realised as the inevitable way to liberation. It is unfortunate that, due to many external and other influences, the continuity of this Tamilian way of life has been severed.

The blind recourse to English education as distinct from the traditional has killed the spirit of the Tamil people. The indictment of Ananda Coomaraswamy

may be considered apposite : "A single generation of English education suffices to break the threads of tradition and to create a nondescript and superficial being deprived of all roots—a sort of intellectual pariah who does not belong to the East or the West, the past or the future. The greatest danger for India is the loss of her spiritual integrity. Of all Indian problems the educational is the most difficult and most tragic." †

Still it is good to remember that a truly progressive society is only possible where there is unity of purpose. In அறம் alone was such unity achieved through definite aims and goals conducive to growth and percolating through the individual into the society. The individual had to surrender his ego to be naturally followed by understanding of socially transforming values such as பரத்துவரணல் where the self (தான்) surrenders to other priorities.

The home were where children were educated, discipplined and enabled to grow into a maturity calling for the highest wisdom and enlightenment.

Unlike today where the home has become the breeding—ground of self-interest and desire, the Tamil tradition made the home the centre of fulfilment. Today desire keeps on extending the scope of personal power and possessions reaching out to ever-widening ranges so that the home is no longer the centre and focus of charity and love. Mothers have no responsibility for the continuance of aram as the vampire of desire battens on the life called the home.

Desire unlimited has killed self - surrender so that man is no longer able to breathe his own life into things.

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† ('Dance of Shiva' - Page 170)

Today youth are no longer concerned with values which they once always cherished as belonging to the morning of their lives. The wine of youth has gone turbid and, as the afternon of life is reached, the meaning and purpose of existence is lost.

Where once people grow with age due to the disciplined, conscious and inner processes at work, there is today delusion. The latter has become the lamentable substitute for illumination. The home in Tamil tradition represented all that was illuminating for the psychic consciousness. It represented all that society meant in fulfilment because the ego faded in the presence of what was the universality of the collective psyche. As the collective instinct took the ascendent, the individual ego had little function except to surrender to the transcendent stage of being which in turn became a becoming.

Valluvar places the household state in a certain sequence which was meaningful to what he had outlined earlier. That was the Still Point or Siva and the sky was transposed into a cosmological reference of man's inter — connectedness with a cosmic arrangement. In their proper sequence and order the others—the greatness of the renounced state, **aram** as the impertive for life's fulfilment and the household state as a meaningful response to the dangerously undermining *influence* of the environment called 'modern'. Further, the value of aram today is lost due to this modern influence than to anything else. It is the same that once the Americen earth held a mystery for the Red Indian. It is the same the mind has to the body that the body has to the earth. On the other hand, environmental influence today is something catastrophically undermining. Where the Red Indian was able to assimilate life, the white man is unable to do so in the natural way because his blood refuses to assimilate anything sprung from foreign soil.

Tamil culture grew out of the இல் or home which was the centre of reference for a life of fulfilment. The extent of damage done to this life by the Western impact through the process known as colonialism has been irreparable. The home (இல்) meant a consciousness of the inner opposite which no education of the modern kind can ever give.

Jung who gave the proper interpretations in the field of psychology which are so much close to Tamil — (though he had no access to that language) — said emphatically : "The essence of culture is continuity and conservation of the past; craving for novelty produces only anti-culture and ends in barbarism." ‡ What we see today as the growth into modern Tamil is clearly an emergence into barbarism. It indicates something entirely imitative and rootless because it is no longer in touch with the maternal and earthy ground of being.

41) **இல்வாழ்வான் என்பான் இயல்புடைய மூவர்க்கும்**
நல்லாற்றின் நின்ற துணை.

The householder indeed is support
In **aram's** path
The three natural orders
Their vocations to take.

Here the stage shifts to the day-to-day world of Tamilian life but not short of the responsibilities cast by **aram**. As if to the emphasise the gravity and importance of the responsibilities, the first Kural here gives the householder the task of making the three other natural orders (இயல்புடைய மூவர்) dependent on the householder.

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‡ "Return to the Simple Life" — Ruckkehr Zum einfachen Leben — in CW 18).

Tamil society had a four - fold division (a) discipline of student - hood or vocational skills in traditional arts and crafts all classified as sixty-four (b) the state of housholder which, from the centre, guided, directed and supported the three other divisions (c) the state of the seer and mystic in whom was grounded all knowledge and wisdom. Valluvar himself belonged to the last category.

The highly—developed culture as well as disciplines, learning and skills among the Tamils distinguished this division from the Aryan Varnashramas. The emphasis on the householder for the continuance of these natural divisions showed that the Tamil here was the centre and focus of learning, culture, social well - being and ultimate liberation for the individual being. Economic subservience was obliterated once the householder took on social responsibilities except for the few that belonged to the kingly order.

Poverty was the immediate concern of the householder unlike modern State devices to eliminate poverty which have only multiplied the evil. The household state was the inevitable condition for the majority of human beings and it generated a direct consciousness of the evils of poverty. Modern State devices through legislation have ended only as palliatives leading to many forms of corruption and even greater dependence and slavery.

In these kurals particular emphasis is laid on what it was to be a householder. The house did not represent the centre of self-interest and greed as unfortunately it is in modern societies.

42) துறந்தார்க்கும் துவ்வா தவர்க்கும் இறந்தார்க்கும்
இல்வாழ்வான் என்பான் துணை.

Their state to remain
Unsullied, undisturbed,
Of the poor and renounced,
The householder indeed is support.

HOMES THAT REFLECTED CHARITY AND PROFOUND LEARNING





The above pictures were taken of a typical Tamil Nadu village on the outskirts of **Thiruk - kazlu -kundram**. The houses here follow the traditional pattern.

The **puram - thinnais** or outer projections found here even now follow the traditional pattern of house building. These were meant for common use either as schools or resting places for those who had taken the way of voluntary poverty. As schools they were known as **thinnai-pallikkudam** where the most disciplined and learned teachers taught.

The modern public school system has made these **thinnai** schools irrelevant today.

The modern world is neurotic. It was not so with the Tamil man's world presented by Valluvar. C. G. Jung sees this modern characteristic as being due to people contenting themselves with inadequate wrong answers to the question of life. He says: "They seek position, marriage, reputation, outward success or money, and remain unhappy and neurotic even when they have attained what they were seeking. Such people are usually confined within too narrow a spiritual horizon. Their life has not sufficient content, sufficient meaning. If they are enabled to develop into more spacious personalities, the neurosis generally disappears."*

The spacious nature of Tamil life was reflected in the very home from where radiated thought for others and concern for the proper functions allotted to man. In varied and broad divisions, the house-holder was trustee of the wealth of land etc. In this Kural are included those who had renounced worldly profit-directed action (துறந்தார்), the truly poor in spirit (துவ்வாதவர்) and the dead (இறந்தார்). The last are not forgotton because the remembrance of the dead is the proper thing for the living since the dead had handed down a great, unsurpassed and valuable tradition. All primordial traditions including the Chinese have had a continuing reverence for the dead.

Duties to the dead include the ceremonial offerings called (**Avippaham**) (அவிப்பாகம்). The entire possibility for the growth and perpetuation of a great living tradition such as Tamil called for such a reverence for those whose physical frame only had vanished from view but whose spirit remained for ever.

43) தென்புலத்தார் தெய்வம் விருந்தொக்கல் தான் என்றாங்
கைம்புலத்தா றோம்பல் தலை.

Duty lies five-fold of householder -
To the dead, the dieties, the guest,
Kinsman and self in that order -
These alone are greatest.

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* "Memories, Dreams, Reflections" - P. 140.

The இல் home and இல் வாழ்வான் householder symbolised the centre and focus of Tamil life. To reach this stage called for great discipline and sense of self sacrifice. The duties cast were those of fulfilment so that the entire community needed at some stage or other to place self-interest at nought.

The duties which were five-fold placed personal needs of individuals last. The performance of duty took such precedence that the ego became submerged to the larger interest of everyone else. Eevery householder had a work which was a vocation and the wealth of the commnnity was produced by him—materially, intellectually or spiritually. He did not produce wealth through evil means. His work for the most part had a theme and a subject with a corresponding a utility and meaning. Tamil society did not permit people to live in squalor and disorder which is different to-day in the sense that people have even become immune to these. Tamil society strictly confined itself to perfecting a divine order and the householder, through conscious performance of the duties laid down here, was able to perfect that order.

44) பழிஅஞ்சிப் பாத்தூண் உடைத்தாயின் வாழ்க்கை
வழிஎஞ்சல் எஞ்ஞான்றும் இல்.

Of wealth he who fears
Unjust acquisition;
Yet looks forward his food to share,
His progeny indeed becomes deathless.

Valluvar emphasises the deathless state for him who surrenders greed and self-interest. Food is not for the individual but for all to share. The householder held the key to social behaviour where productivity and charity went together. He was the unit at the apex of the social ladder in whom was reposed a trust—first to acquire wealth by just means and second to see that no want existed in the whole community.

The word பழி implies a transgression followed by a visitation. No one could be guilty of பழி especially those who chose the life of householder. The synonym for householder was that of இல்வாழ்வான் which automatically stripped it of all self-interest and greed. Life became the focus and attention of the household state. There was an unanimity of understanding in the Tamil tradition because it was metaphysical. Hence the perfectability of the individual was understood as through consciousness of social duties. This brought about the total absence of notions of private property except where these were surrendered to social and spiritual purpose. The individual's path was one of liberation which meant complete surrender of self-interest and greed leading to the practice of charity as of universal worth. In a way the householder was the sage whose mind was in repose. "The mind of the sage, being in repose, becomes the mirror of the Universe, the speculum of all creation." (Chuang-Tzu).

Thirumanthiram deals specifically with the concept of charity as one of eternal giving and taking :

யாருக்கும் இடுமின் அவரிவரென்னென் மின்

There is nothing to distinguish the receiver except his want or need. In a socially and religiously developed society the might of giving overtakes taking in the sense. that someone is materially in need. Material want was not felt in Tamil society because every one felt the other's material and spiritual needs.

45) அன்பும் அறனும் உடைத்தாயின் இல்வாழ்க்கை
பண்பும் பயனும் அது.

If household virtues twain —
Love and Aram do pervade—

These indeed reflect
True culture and life's fulfilment.

The household was expected to uphold the straight and narrow path leading to liberation for the individual and the community. Without love and **Aram** the home naturally becomes the **fons et origo** of social evil generating greed, selfishness and inequality. Neither was marriage considered a necessary liberating and social function, if the home could not contain within it the virtues needed for liberation. Society stood for a concept - a term for the symbiosis of a group of human beings - but it is the individual who was the sole nnd natural carrier of life. It was the individual who contributed to the ascendency of the collective.

In the modern world where many social movements are afoot to bring about economic and other equalities, the effort to eradicate self-interest has been found altogether difficult. In the emphasis given to the home as the centre for generating self-surrender and charity, Valluvar gave expression to what had been achieved in the Dravidian society. That peak had been reached after many millennia of trial and error.

46) அறத்தாற்றின் இல்வாழ்க்கை யாற்றின் புறத்தாற்றிற்
போஒய்ப் பெறுவ தெவன்.

What virtue can there be
Outside the domestic state?
Even the ascetic become is unproductive.
Aram alone belongs to the household.

The special feature of **aram** is that it belongs to the home which is outside the pale of asceticism. Even the latter state becomes dependent on the householder to maintain and help attain fulfilment. In ancient Tamil Nadu the householder provided for the basic economic needs of the ascetic as well. There lay a befitting environment for the individual ego to submerge

into a large context through self-surrender. The highest point of self-surrender was reached by the householder. The wife was **a pathini,** meaning the eternally devoted and virtuous, only because she had no other interest than the ultimate goal of her husband which was to keep the path of **aram** unsullied.

The tragedy to-day is the degradation of Tamil life through external influences and the infatuation with the modern theory of **laizsez-faire.** The life represented by Valluvar coincided with an unanimous culture in which people were activated by a certain knowledge linked with the inner and outer life. That knowledge served a purpose because it communicated a gnosis,

In a truly socialist society of the future no one can project a perfectability unless the norms of Valluvar are applied and understood. Here liberation is conceived of for all, whatever the state his occupation may be, because a universal determinant was laid in the state of householder through which most beings generally had to pass. Men and women shared the burden socially, culturally and religiously so that no offence was done to anyone within the social framework.

Whereas today the function of the State has been enlarged to deal with social and economic problems, in Valluvar's concept underlay the withering away of the State under a conscious and religious impulse which enabled more binding duties and functions. These belonged to the householder as the trustee of the most wholesome and fullsome order. The equivalent of this order cannot be found in the modern world distraught as it is by the evils of commerce and industry. All that is modern is a rupture with the traditional spirit. It has brought all thinking and action on the social and intellectual level to one of dispersion and limitation of knowledge. Today action in the world has been reduced to the lowest order imaginable because the individual is not conscious of his inner opposite.

In the attempt to reduce everything to the status of man taken as an end in himself, the means have only been found to-day to multiply wants artificially without equivalent hope of their satisfaction so that the passage of living thought embodied in doctrinal forms has been substituted for by agitated, unregulated and aimless thinking and action.

The sage is said to be outside the empirical. He belongs to the earth—to the life here—amid the clash of opposites, but still above at the point where the general consciousness is raised. His consciousness has welled up from unknown depths.

But the householder is representative of **aram** — the Centre and goal of the Self. He is able to identify himself with his own persona which becomes the persona of others too. He is the central archetype of a perfect socal order repersenting the entirety of its personality. He is the eye of the social arrangement penetrating even the starry heavens. He is the link of the known with the unknown. To be indentified with **aram** (அறத்தாற்றின் வாழ்க்கை) means grave responsibilities and functions.

Valluvar could not have said it more effectively that to be in the state of householder was all that could be achieved of the goal of life—higher even than that of the sage. The household duty, if it was to reach fulfilment, was through consciousness of the inner opposite It accepted the right of existence to others and thus was able to demolish even the vestige of social problems which in the modern world are gigantic and unsolved. He became the soul of everything going by accepting indubitable values as his heart heard the great things that span the human life.

The householder was in no way like the modern man who has stripped all things of their mystery and numinosity. He lived the truth and truth is nothing if it cannot live.

47) இயல்பினான் இல்வாழ்க்கை வாழ்பவன் என்பான்
முயல்வாருள் எல்லாந் தலை

To him in the natural state of householder
Belongs higher perceptions.
Sages cannot reach who strive
Beyond sense perceptions.

Here Valluvar elevates the householder as higher than a sage. Though the latter's greatness is that he has subjugated sense directions to a central co-ordinated will, the householder, by the very nature of his status and responsibilities in society, embraces both the practical and transcendent thus maintaining unsullied the traditional and metaphysical order. The householder's life was not aimless or illusory when he accepted the sage within the ambit of his support and sustenance.

Valluvar makes constant effort to stress the life-affirming aspect of what constituted the Tamil home. It was the centre and driving force for the exclusive develop ment of possibilities that could be called the highest in man. Truth is outside the human mind because it exists independent of ourselves but the grasp of truth to make it live outside the indefinite complexity of the things of the senses made the house holder the living embodiment of what wasp rincipial in the Tamilian life.

In the household state is something natural which elevates its function and hold on society. This natural state carries with it tremendous social responsibilities. The social order functioned smoothly, efficiently and towards a life-affirming goal only because the householder was the producer and trustee of wealth. He was also responsible

for the maintenance of an order where every one was hopeful of liberation and where personal functions were transmitted from generation to generation. All beneditory occupations were vocational and each in the role of householder held the concept of social justice as of prime necessity and concern.

Duties of the household became objective and towards clearly defined goals. Bred in traditional concepts of order and meaning, the Tamil people gave emphasis to things of an abiding nature. Hence the householder was representative of a natural order (இயல்பினில் வாழ்க்கை) where there was striving towards a goal in the same way as an ascetic goes forward abandoning atachment and desire.

To emphasise the greater function of the householder in society, Valluvar places even the ascetic state below it The householder had inner and outer functions, those that pertain to the world and those which seek to sustain liberation as the universal path of mankind.

48) ஆற்றின் ஒழுக்கி அறனிழுக்கா இல்வாழ்க்கை
நோற்பாரின் நோன்மை உடைத்து,

Aram, the household path,
Liberates the sage as well.
The enduring way for ascetic and all
It doth uphold.

Valluvar highlights **aram** in this kural as one generated by the housholder. The ascetic depends on the needed inspiration and suppor .

Liberation for man in the Tamil tradition is not merely from economic and social want, it means a consistent endeavour to take the whole society out of the mere temporal into the timeless state of self-realisation.

Emphatically Valluvar says that in the householder's state is found the fullness of **aram** as brought out in the next Kural (49). In that fullness the sage too takes abode, for the householder has been established as the beacon—light of liberation. He combines action with realisation and the path of worldly action had been clearly shown as one of enlightenment.

The sage as ascetic had only a secondary place in the social arrangement. The householder built the economic edifice to support the dependent sections among which were the sages — the householder himself being in that self - imposed task the entire resource and strength of the community.

49) அறனெனப்பட்டதே இல்வாழ்க்கை அஃதும்
பிறன்பழிப்ப தில்லாயின் நன்று.

The household state alone is **Aram.**
Its virtue thus remains,
Without stain and unsullied—
Not tarnished by reproach.

Valluvar emphasises perfectibility for the social order based on **aram**. That state calls for much discipline and self - sacrifice. The slightest deviation would cause immense and irretrievable harm.

In the larger context the householder shouldered the responsiblity because his state embraced the largest numbers—the sage remaining outside the pale of social and economic endeavour. In the discipline of the householder's life was contained all other disciplines even of the ascetic. In the this context, tradition brings out a life of Valluvar which is a perfect reflection of what a householder's would have been. (Please see appendix for this)

50) வையத்துள் வாழ்வாங்கு வாழ்பவன் வானுறையும்
தெய்வத்துள் வைக்கப் படும்.

Whose life has no reproach,
Though householder on earth,
He indeed belongs to heaven
To the very gods above.

Heaven and earth are brought together in the perfect household state. The earthly love that binds the household state yields place to the love that governs the heavenly order.

It is necessary to look at the concept of love on the profane and sacred levels The love that transcends is heavenly but the love that is involved in greed and selfishness - (the symptom of modern and Western attitudes)— cannot contain the home either in the married state, the upbringing of children and surrender to the community's growth and self—expression. There is some relevence here to the observation of Pope John Paul in Canada on 12th September, 1983, which shows how much modern concepts of love have driven people to despair. The Pope urged teenagers to keep away from drink, drugs and pre - marital sex. He said, "Have the courage to resist the dealers in deception who make capital of your hunger for happiness and who make you pay dearly for a moment of 'artificial paradise', a whiff of smoke, a bout of drinking or drugs". What claims to be a shortcut to happiness leads nowhere Thanking youngsters from broken homes who had written to him he said, "You have been wounded to the point of sometimes doubting whether a faithful and lasting love is possible". He also said, "Do not confuse a premature experience of pleasure with the giving of oneself in love forever and forever".

Most people afflicted with the modern thing called 'civilization' are victims of the psychic dichotomy of our

time. In Valluvar's time people were not afflicted by the perilous aberration which has resulted from the attempts to dominate everything by the intellect. The intellect today suffers from a neurosis because feeling and experiences beyond the three - dimensional have been left undeveloped. The contemporary psyche is rotten and has to be mercilessly exposed. The Tamil people lived with reality and grappled with the nature of the archetype per se - a reality as the psychologist would say in the **Mysterium Coniunctionis**.

Valluvar constructed the living psychic structure relating everything purposefully and meaningfully into the economy of the whole thus leaving no room for clash with the shadow of the self.

This Chapter on the duties and functions of the householder places the social order on an even keel with no conflicts or contradictions. The married state no doubt was the inevitable stage for the majority and it was only the infinitismally few who were liberated from it such as the mystics and scholars in the tradition of Arumuga Navalar. Ever since Western influences came into play, the married state has been tied up with self-interest and greed so that poverty and want have multiplied.

Valluvar therefore next proceeds to deal with wifely functions and the virtues therein making the picture clear about the place of women in the functions and duties of the householder .

CHAPTER VI

வாழ்க்கை துணை நலம்.

THE HOUSEWIFE - HER VIRTUES

The Tamil society, as tradition had it, was not designed to disappear in primeval mists. Wtih the impact of an outer world both alien and repugnant, the society which elevated the woman to great heights of benevolence and charity has suddenly transformed her into one not merely of personal failure but stripped her as well of the womanly virtues which bound and connected her to humanity.

The woman's function has become at the optimum only that of a social being, no longer at harmony with herself because she can only adapt to an outer world parading ignorance and ineptitude. She has created for herself a state of inner discord suffering as she does from an overdose of self - esteem. She suffers from a profound spiritual malaise having for the most part sacrificed her former mental and spiritual charm.

The lack of tradition in contemporary societies has led to loss of roots and the so-called rationalistic materialism has made the woman confused and disoriented. The resultant state of the woman today may be called pathological and in the mass they are breeding grounds of psychic epidemics. How far she has gone in delusion can be seen in the rejection **in toto** of the norms laid down by Valluvar for the proper function and liberation of womanhood.

The devotion and self-sacrifice of woman in Tamil tradition is brought out forcibly by Valluvar in these **Kurals.** It is found everywhere in the great **Sangam poetry.** From the life in the spirit once lived to the life

lived entirely in the ego is the difference in the old and modern concepts of womanhood. The ego grows out of greed and avarice which is part and parcel of the materialistic outlook of the modern world. **Rene Guenon** brings this out effectively: "Everything that derives from the matter can beget nothing but strife and all manner of conflict between peoples as well as between individuals. The more deeply one becomes involved in matter, the more the elements of division and opposition gain force and scope; on the other hand, the more one rises towards pure spirituality. the nearer one draws to that unity which can only be fully realized through consciouness of the universal principles". *

The domestic state, being inevitable for the vast majority naturally embraces the functions of women and the virtues needed for such functions. In this Chapter, Chastity is first virtue for, without it, there cannot be constancy in dedicated action implied in the household state.

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* (page 33, "**Crisis of the Modern World**".)

(In the performance of domestic and social functions)

51) மனைத்தக்க மாண்புடைய ளாகித்தற் கொண்டான்
வளத்தக்காள் வாழ்க்கைத் துணை.

She indeed is life's support
In all things frugal,
Of virtue supreme to accord
Her lord's goal and duties sacred.

The duties of the householder which were the entirety of the social, economic and religious functions of the

community have been dealt with already. These called for the wife to be the perfect and ideal participant because without her, the home ceased to function according to the norms laid down in Tradition.

Complete self-abnegation and surrender were needed because the wife's duties could not conflict with the aims and goals of the husband. The social order would collapse where the wife no longer could identify her duties with the larger needs of the community around and the consciousness of which was represented in the home by her lord and master.

There is an excellence conveyed by the word மாண்பு which keeps intact the abiding virtues of the woman in the household. The husband needed all the support in the proper functioning of his mission as householder, hence the beautiful expression வாழ்க்கைத்துணை used to describe her meaning 'life's support'.

52) மனைமாட்சி இல்லாள்கண் இல்லாயின் வாழ்க்கை
எனைமாட்சித் தாயினும் இல்.

She without domestic excellence,
Well-endowed though otherwise,
Makes void indeed the household
All other virtues apart.

The wife's main task was to make the home serve the ends of man. She was partner in the great task of uplifting **Aram** so that the community on the whole was elevated to higher states of consciousness. She could not be a hindrance or obstacle to the goals of well-being for the society. The very concept of household embodied domestic virtues where the woman shared as much dedication and responsibility and where she would herself transcend the lower reaches of self-interest.

53) இல்லதென் இல்லவள் மாண்பானால் உள்ளதென்
இல்லவள் மாணாக் கடை,

The household, though blessed
And aboundeth in all virtue,
Bereft if it is of the worthy,
Becomes of no worth.

In the unanimous society that Tamil was, there was order and meaning in all things. Marriage was designed to continue that order, not as at present to give way to any commercia outlook or self-interest. For profoundly and instinctively spiritual and progressive reasons, no private property in ideal was allowed to prevail and the marriage state allowed no intrusion of the ego. In unanimous cultures it was necessary to maintain self-denying disciplines and a house-wife who was egotistical and greedy could find no place in them.

The household possessed a doctrine and theme which needed constant spiritual regeneration without any opportunity for the least aspect of it to be secularised. It was centre for the very life of the community unlike to-day where the house, well supplied with mechanised and labour-saving devices, has become "a machine to live in".

Today the house has become divided against itself-divided through politics and emphasis on book culture. It was different with the Tamil society spoken of by Valluvar where there was "such community of ideas and feelings that the whole people formed one individual". There was no distinction between culture and the uncultured masses on the basis of what the moderns look upon as literacy. Even in the highest seats of learning it has been observed that what remains of culture is just empirical and factual information Women brought up in this enervating life called education and culture should certainly be unfit for tasks needed to run any spiritually and mentally progressive society.

54) பெண்ணிற் பெருந்தக்க யாவுள கற்பென்னும்
திண்மையுண் டாகப் பெறின்.

If Chastity be that of woman
What greater virtue can there be?
Nothing surpasseth the woman
Whose strength is her chastity.

Chastity கற்பு in woman was always a neeessary virtue if she was to fit into household life. It is one virtue that sexually differentiates a woman in her worldly conduct and therefore distinguishes her from the man. It was among Tamils considered the substance of the life of womanhood, its excellence in maintaining the manifold and special functions of the household. The latter belonged to the whole of society as the peak of its self-realisation.

Womanhood called for identity of temperament and funotion to re. p the abundance that characterised the household. The function of the home was spiritual and oalled for complete self-surrender. In a way the husband was intellectual mentor and spiritual teacher while she, for her part, was capable of perpetually creating those qualities needed for relationship with the society around. Those were dedication to household funetion, self-surrender, charity and unselfish love. There was not the slightest trace of the ego in the household state and this in abundance the Tamil womanhood reflected.

55. தெய்வந் தொழாஅள் கொழுநற் றொழுதெழுவாள்
பெய்யெனப் பெய்யும் மழை.

Worshipping she her lord and master
Not any diety—
Such wifely state the rains to fall
Hath power to command.

Here, when the husband has become the place of pilgrimage, there is no need for worship of any external power or to invoke dieties. Household duties were themselves heavenly and, in their due performance, the powers of heaven and earth were bestowed. Invoking dieties showed lack of dedication to one's vocation in life which in itself was entirely liberating. In that state there was power over heaven and earth-**Here** and **Now**. The Saiva woman was entirely conscious of duties and had no clamour for rights. Her home was all that heaven meant. In fact the thought of heaven was only for the wayward. Heaven was always at the beck and call of virtue and womanly virtue was the highest - the Kingdom of Heaven was truly within her. The feelings of such women were stronger than the physical reaching of clouds to bring about rain.

56. தற்காத்துத் தற்கொண்டாற் பேணித் தகைசான்ற
சொற்காத்துச் சோர்விலாள் பெண்.

She indeed is woman -
Her chastity guarded, her lord obeyed,
The household name protected:
All such infirmness unwaveringly.

The peculiarly Tamilian regard for womanhood is the transfer to it of special virtues - chastity, obedience to the norms of social behaviour which enforces love and fulfilment of wifely and household duties, in addition to upholding the household reputation where the performance of social and religious duties goes.

There was fulfilment and satisfaction in the proper performance of duties and the Tradition had through long period of trial and error found that woman as well as man had duties only and not rights. To demand and multiply wants was alien to the Tamil mind though today modern influences have crept into Tamil Nadu to defeat the aims and destroy the wholesome and elevating social order which gave the woman a distinguished place.

To be a woman பெண் signified great love, devotion, surrender of the ego and fulfilment of function and all women aspired to that status. It was altogether different from conditions where today women have not merely became weak but *also self-assertive so that poverty* and want have taken grip of large numbers leaving the greedy minority to multiply their wants and increase their avarice. In place of the modern calculating assertion of rights, there was love that transcended all things vulgar and profane. In the woman alone rested life.

57. சிறைகாக்கும் காப்பெவன் செய்யும் மகளிர்
நிறைகாக்கும் காப்பே தலை.

> No walls can guard
> Nor prison a woman keep
> 'Tis chastity alone
> Her fullness will sustain.

The peculiar concept called chastity is one that even to-day marks out and distinguishes the Tamil womanhood. The Kural here seeks to emphasise chastity as the highest hallmark of womanhood because nothing else can safeguard her against the onslaughts of evil.

Evil is intermingled with good but in chastity both are reconciled in a life in the ever-present. It is to live in the light of the present on what one has, not on promises or the darkness of the future. It is not to buy something better at the price of something worse. Chastity will not strip a woman of her roots and guiding instincts. Chastity reflects great forbearance and love and is not carried away by the deceptive sweet rings of existence. Modern woman caught in the tempo of events and of life is left with little time for the things that belong to charity or chastity. The acceleration in the tempo of life and the speed of events has engulfed her in profanities, if one may say, altogether. Even the recent past of the West knew that

all haste is of the devil - **omnio festinatio ex parte diaboli est**.

The fulfilment in **aram** is chastity, not mere servitude to man. Both have an equal calling but the woman's role makes it imperative that chastity rules even through the inferno of passions. Hence Valluvar says enslavement for the woman begins when chastity is lost.

58) பெற்றாற் பெற்றிபெறுவர் பெண்டிர் பெருஞ்சிறப்புப்
புத்தேளிர் வாழும் உலகு.

Heaven or earth where the gods too inhabit
The woman's place is exalted
If, in surrender to wifely duties,
She doth excel.

புத்தேளிர் 'வாழு முலகு, meaning 'the earth where the gods inhabit' brings out something accepted in the Saiva metaphysical tradition. The great Saiva saints such as Manikkavasagar have given utterence to this :

இந்தப்பூமி சிவனுய்யக் கொள்கின்றவா றென்று
நோக்கித் திருப்பெருந்துறையுறை திருமாலாம்
அவன் விருப் பெய்தவும் மலரவன் ஆசைப்படவும், (திருப்
பள்ளியெழுச்சி)

வழுத்தியும் காணு மலரடி யிணைகள்
வழுத்துதற் கெளிதாய் வார்கடல் உலகினில் (போற்றித்
திருவகவல்)

meaning that the earth is loved of gods so that even Brahma and Vishnu seek birth therein. The Aryan and Sanskrit concept of other spheres where gods, devas, etc. live, was not part of the Tamil people's thinking. Even Siva took form here and mystics such as Msnikkavasagar were able to become the reservoirs and springs of eternal outpourings unequalled by any language and poetry in the world.

What is tragic is that the western industrial-commercial civilization has taken root in Tamil territory driving out

the wholesome life of the people based on clear understanding of the nature of the universe and of life. There has been something like a nuclear chain reaction which has torn apart their lives and driven an invisible wedge into their psyches and economics. What Alvin Toffler said in his **"The Third World"** is now becoming apparent : "Industrial civilization today seems something less than utopean - in fact it appears to be oppressive, dreary, ecologically precarious, war-prone and psychologically repressive."

To excel in duties which call for entire self-surrender such as that of housewife, was the highest state of liberation for woman. Her mind was not darkened or impaired and nothing was hidden for her. She was able to find the virtue and power of truth and therefore her household could perform miracles.

Consciousness has to confront its shadow and household duties with their exalted functions was the very centre of consciousness. The woman had no personal ego which seizes the reins of power to its own destruction. She was in fact the **coincidentia oppositorum** with redeeming effects. She belonged indeed to the world of the **devas,** the gods.

59) புகழ்புரிந் தில்லிலோர்க் கில்லை இகழ்வார்முன்
ஏறுபோற் பீடுநடை.

He, without wife renowned and virtue extolled,
Is bereft of manliness
To walk with leonine bearing
Before every reviler.

Here is involved the absolute need of virtue and constancy to **Aram** in the household functions of a woman. The word இல் **Il** for a woman in household state is pregnant with meaning that, without her, the home is stripped of its

significant function and meaning. Lack of an appropriate partner in household functions must necessarily cause division in a society fully conscious of social and religious obligations and duties.

A man in his assigned function as householder must have the strength of a lion to bear criticism of defaults. Without a suitable life's partner he must naturally become impotent and weak. Where the social order calls for strength to go forward, the failure in household duties of a woman must naturally recoil on the householder. The wind bloweth where it listeth but not where internal conflict or incompatibility makes moral and spiritual restraint an imposition. Everything was voluntary, based on self-sureender. Compulsive systems never served the purpose in Tamil tradition. There was no psychic dichotomy arising out of projecting a purely exterior world as seen today by science. People in the Tradition perceived and lived with the Truth and detractors were few and far between. The archetypal type belonged to true experience and the spirit of the Tamil people lived in deeds and in facts.

The finest and the most significant was covered in anonymity. Self-assertion anywhere, especially among woman—kind, was a danger to the social order as interpreted by Valluvar with such insight and certitude. Valluvar's society was alive and critical because it knew the importance of social responsibilities.

60) மங்கலம் என்ப மனைமாட்சி மற்றதன்
நன்கலம் நன்மக்கட் பேறு.

Household excellence is wifely virtue;
That alone exalts the man.
The other ornament is birth indeed
Of proper off-spring.

Children represent the continuing process in the social order based on **Aram**. A disciplined and ordered society must have a proper succession. The subjective conflict of the opposites which today has torn apart homes, societies and civilisations cannot be allowed to enter the household. Here the psyche set up in accord with pattern of the universe found its fulfilment in the reconciliation of opposites.

The household was the school of upbringing for children more significant than any modern educational systems however much may have been written about them. The task of discipline and upbringing belonged also to the household. Towards this fulfilment wifely excellence and the bringing forth of a disciplined and wise progeny were considered **sine qua non**.

Children have to be born anew all the time and that is possible in the proper and appropriate environment expecially provided in the household. There was need to raise man out of the animal world — out of the apparently senseless biological turmoil. The Tamil disciplines in learning and life were combined in the household which was most directly concerned with not allowing any inhibitions on the fullness that life really was.

The household was the place of initiation for children in the consciousness of and life with Truth. The initation was properly that of the mother which straight away marked out the goal. There were no crutches for the lame, beds for the lazy, shields for the timid and miseries for the irresponsible such as are provided through the manifold educational experiments of to-day. There were no conflicts of duties either but something authentic and truthful which brought about coherence and a sense of collectivity. As psychologists would say there were no opposites and contradictions which threatened the unity of the personality or entangled life again and again in their diehotomies.

CHAPTER VII

THE BEGETTING OF CHILDREN

மக்கட் பேறு

The famed commentator Parimelazhagar categorises the duties of the householder as being related also to **Thenpulathar** தென்புலத்தார் or the dead. There were besides ritual functions called வேள்வி connected with **devas** and those that pertained to sages which belonged to கேள்வி or hearing. Through attunement where the ear had a specific function, the sage was capable of obliterating completely the multitude of psychic contents and images. Thus a reassurance and inward calm was produced. The begetting of right off-spring for the performance of all these functions which were imperative, devolved entirely on the householder.

There is a relationship between the eternal man—the self and the earthly man of time and space which modern psychology has found to be true. Where we look at things from the focal-point of the ego there emerges an enigmatic world of obscurity. There is a difference between the ego and the unconscious. The images of the latter have a reality and spontaneity all their own. Hence man on the higher level becomes more and more aware of a transcendence — a light which illumines the darkness within.

In this chapter emphasis is laid on off-spring. The concept of marriage is a self-effacing one and the begetting of children is a sacred duty only to the extent that off-spring are made capable of the tasks and responsibilities that lie ahead. Children were not considered the result merely - and that purblind - of the married state. There was nothing left for irresponsible upbringing and discipline. The child had to grow into the inner man which is the totality of the individual. He had to evolve,

as the psychologists now would say, into "the synthesis of all parts of the psyche, and therefore of the conscious and the unconscious." He had to represent everything worthwhile — the thology of kingship, the living soul becoming in turn the life - giving spirit and man indeed of upright stature

Thus concern in Tradition which Valluvar upholds was to prevent an otherwise unavoidable and deeper descent of society into animal nature — a phenomenon noticeable today despite all the craze for mass education and the application of modern methods to eradicate 'illiteracy'.

61. பெறுமவற்றுள் யாமறிவ தில்லை அறிவறிந்த
மக்கட்பே றல்ல பிற.

> No birth we know is worthy
> Except those alone of children
> Who knowledge from wisdom
> Know rightly to discriminate.

Wisdom and knowledge are distinct. The former gives power of discrimination where knowledge alone cannot provide. There is a self-denying discipline which underlies traditional doctrines. This is not available in modern education where more often the inept and vague are allowed to prevail and people take pleasure in deformities as a matter of daily routine.

Children has to know beauty as truth, not isolated from it. They had to be trained through self-discipline to a consciousness of social responsibility. Hence upbringing of children involved great discipline and responsibility for the householder. It was easy for children to fit in because education and discipline were not torn out of the social melieu.

The desired end was the whole man and this was achieved because there were no organic or psychic ills

which needed cure as it happens today through a thousand and one modern devices.

The planning of children was for perfectability in which alone was self-control and proper family planning.

62. எழுபிறப்பும் தீயவை தீண்டா பழிபிறங்காப்
பண்புடை மக்கட் பெறின்.

Evil through seven births
Will not assail
Where children cultured and without reproach
Are begot.

In this is embodied two main propositions ; (1) Birth is not merely the outcome but the continuance caused by failure to liberate oneself from the opposites. (2) Liberation from such births is also brought about by the sacrifice through discipline of one's children and their surrender to the goal of liberation.

It is common to look through recurring births in terms af numerological concepts which were sacred. Seven births comprise one circle in the same way as seven notes.

ஏழேழ் சுற்றம் முரணுறு நரகிடை
ஆழாமேயருள் அரசே போற்றி.

comprise an octave. From Thiruvasagam போற்றித்திருவகவல் is one of several instances where seven becomes part of sacred numerology in Tamil Tradition.

The task of bringing up children was a sacred and life-time one. The society of Valluvar never abjured responsibility of any serious kind since discipline and education were part of the whole way of life. Hence education was not given over to mass institutions as to-day, whether school, college or University, where the products are generally

more philistine than educated or cultured. The even more serious charge is that social responsibility arising out of social and religious consciousness is no longer present in modern and western - based societies.

Education in Tamil called for a transformation and renewal in knowledge, not a sinking as today deep in the mire. The thirst for knowledge is no longer accompanied by the cry for deliverence. Ignorance to-day is allowed like the waterflood to overflow and swallow the individual. There is no desire too to separate the opposites as much, as possible and strive for singleness of meaning because, as Jung says, "Wisdom never forgets that all things have two sides."

To unite the polarity of all existence was the aim of Tamil education as can be seen in the whole of Sangam poetry. The parental role was to see that children were learned and cultured so that **Aram** as the way of life was not lost in meaning. Learning therefore had to be a renewal in knowledge and this knowledge, it was admitted, lived in all creatures as the spirit of wisdom. There was no opportunity given for extinction of light in darkness. The treasures of supreme knowledge found in Tamil could not be allowed to evaporate into nothing, not as is being, done to-day through involvement in shallow rationalism. Obscurity as the ancients would say was the darkness of disease and sickness of body and mind.

68) தம்பொரு ளென்பதம் மக்கள் அவர்பொருள்
தந்தம் வினையான் வரும்.

Children, they say, are wealth indeed
Of parents. To children
Wealth alone accrues
From deeds good and evil

The opposites, good and evil, have an irritating rationality because they are in conflict. There is in them however a latent state of concord. Children represent the ego which however is dependent on a higher and mightier non-ego. Progress, enlightenment and liberation is from the ego and there is a spiritual authority transcending the ego. The child has to grow into a living being despite his ego-bound state. The wealth implied in children is their capacity to liberate. In the conflict and synthesis of the conscious and unconscious, children are looked upon as belonging to parents or to a state liberated from their individual egos.

In the modern sense children easily turn sinful and empirical but not so with the Tamil Tradition where the divine psyche was recognised as far above the human. Parents knew their tasks and they got about not blindly or at random. In the tension of opposites parents thought of children as their own but in their polarity children really belonged to the heavenly and liberated state. Here Tao becomes one so that heaven and earth, parental love and universal love, are united in harmony.

64) அமிழ்தினும் ஆற்ற இனிதேதம் மக்கள்
சிறுகை யளாவிய கூழ்.

Sweet indeed is ambrosia
But sweeter the porridge
Mixed by the little hands
Of one's own children

Here in crisp and touching manner is brought out the natural love that parents have towards their children. This is peculiar to Tamil society where even the cheapest form of food called கூழ் - (a sort of porridge made out of grains, vegetable, green leaf and flour) - is considered even more palatable and sweet for the parents where the little hands of their children have gone into making a buddle of it.

In playfulness children do put their hands into cooked food. For parents such prattle and mischief do not defile but make the food even more palatable.

The child's life with childish games and innocence have something lovable. It produces a fantasy which yields to play and frolic - a state which every sensitive person would dearly feel within himself. Valluvar creates a world of deeply-felt love, not selfish in any way or possessive, but surrendering to a natural condition for man's growth and realisation.

The rational mind of today has put aside the love that grows and should be nurtured from childhood and in its place has substituted superficialities which are both defeatist and fragmentary. The irritation and disharmony arising from lack of love stands against harmony and wholeness of personality. Everyone today is driven by unabiding selfish attachment, not self-surrendering love. A state has been reached which has no finality but every little thing Valluvar discovers has a wholeness and meaning because he belonged to the liberating principles of love. The kingdom of Valluvar's child points to the gates of heaven and the land of dreams.

65) மக்கள்மெய் தீண்டல் உடற்கின்பம் மற்றவர்
சொற்கேட்டல் இன்பஞ் செவிக்கு.

The touch of one's children
Doth give pleasure to the body.
Their voices indeed
Give sweetness to the ear.

The body feels and the ear responds. Children give pleasure to the body by mere touch and it is the touch of consciousness in off-spring. A sense of physical belonging arises which creates a new the love — pervading the home.

At the child level the love is expressed in how much interaction there is found in touch and sound. As the child grows the association develops through touch and sound and builds a child world which calls only for love and care. The true home is the breeding place of love - whether profane or sacred. Children denied this growth naturally turn perverse and maladjusted.

In Western societies the quick snapping of human bonds has been made easier by children denied parental association and love.

66) குழலினி தியாழினி தென்பதம் மக்கள்
மழலைச் சொற் கேளா தவர்.

Sweet they say are lute and veena;
But those are they
Who have not heard
Their own ones' prattle.

Valluvar is projecting all the time the sense of natural love and affection. The spring of such love is the home because it is altogether self-effacing.

Even parents with sensitive ears for microtonal intervals will surrender the consciousness of grammar for the child's prattle. It signifies, more than even music the emergence of life into bloom and its pursuit of a path shorn of madness and confusion.

The child's urge is liberation through the body whilst the urge in old age is liberation from the burden of the body. The child will grow into the three-dimensional life whilst parents know the limitations having tasted enough of that life. The child reminds of a past already lived and outgrown and the dormant urge is passionately to reminesce in it. Therefore fond memories of childhood assail and a fondness grown out of the dream images. There develops a rapport and love in the

comprehension or rather meeting of the two psychic states. The reality of life is more often the sharing of love but here even a prattle becomes musical because love embraces and overwhelms all the limiting states. The unconscious knows more than consciousness does.

67. தந்தை மகற்காற்று நன்றி அவையத்து
முந்தி இருப்பச் செயல்.

To make the son hold place
At the forefront of society-
That indeed is duty
Enjoined on the father.

Gratitude is both paternal and filial. Valluvar is not concerned with a profane order where children can be left to the care of public schools or other institutions. The responsibility is towards an end which ultimately raises the level of society - socially, culturally and religiously. To become a person of worth in a disciplined society calls for great learning, wisdom and dedication to the ideals of **aram.**

In an anti - traditional society such as that influenced by the modern West, the responsibilities of parent and child are never understood to be integrated into social disciplines and education. To-day, the concept of disciplined education is deficient in principles and hetrogeneous elements have crept in which have sought to obliterate the doctrinal aspect found in Tamil education. It was independent of individual contingencies based on the knowledge that real knowledge is a transmission from above downwards and therefore principial.

To become adept in any one of the 64 branches of traditional Tamil learning was to qualify for a position in society. It was a long process of discipline, learning and

competence. The father has a debt to pay to the son to see that the latter carries on the tradition by becoming part of the disciplined process.

68. தம்மிற்றம் மக்கள் அறிவுடைமை மாநிலத்து
மன்னுயிர்க் கெல்லாம் இனிது.

The Wisdom of one's children
Is pleasurable indeed,
Not to oneself alone
But to all other life.

Here Valluvar emphasises children as being valuable if they only were intelligent, responsive and wise. The word அறிவு in Tamil conveys an inherited wisdom which leads on to **gnosis.** It has nothing to do with modern concepts of knowledge acquired through schooling with only selfish and utilitarian goals. Modern education and the knowledge acquired through it has only sufficed to break the threads of Tradition. In the process it has created nondescript and superficial beings deprived of all roots.

Arivu அறிவு is inborn in most children and if allowed to grow through proper guidance and nurture. does become the only asset in the fulfilment of human function Such function becomes a spontaneous activity which helps the natural and ecological balance needed for life's fulfilment. Its goal is final surrender of the ego.

In Tamilian thought is the unity and interdependence of all life - hence the expression here மன்னுயிர்க் கெல்லாம் இனிது. It is opposed to the anarchy created by Western notions of **laissez-faire** where everything leads to conflict and division

Children had to be trained to take the centre or the middle where the present is always justified. The present

lay neither in the past nor the future The discipline called for was hard no doubt beause naturally it is colder towards the summit.

Wisdom, not learning, it was that mattered because it was only the former which was in accord with and responsive to nature. அறிவு therefore is a precious inheritance and Valluvar emphasises here its unifying nature and that with all life—மன்னுயிர்,

69) ஈன்ற பொழுதிற் பெரிதுவக்கும் தன்மகனைச்
சான்றோன் எனக் கேட்ட தாய்,

To the mother truly
The joy of a son's birth
Is outpaced on hearing,
"He indeed is renowned, wise".

The regard with which a man is looked upon and honoured in society hinges in Tamil tradition round the word சான்றோன் which included every high quality of virtue. The world belonged to the wise and it is All Things to the Children of Wisdom.

A son's birth gives joy but that he is one of the true elite in which exists the force of truth and which enables the concentration of society in principial unity, was a great fulfilment of the mother's own desire for the son's final destiny. Naturally the joy of such mother is great and the word **Sandron** சான்றோன் embraces this as the highest state.

The mother's role in the education and upbringing of children was discipline in surrender of the ego to a higher consciousness. It was this role which made Ananda Coomaraswamy comment that Indian women "have remained the guardians of a spiritual culture which is of greater worth than the efficiency and information of the educated."*

* (P. 118 — "Dance of Shiva".)

To bring forth worthy children was the norm and every mother wanted the son to take his place in the hierarchical structure where the highest quality needed was that of சான்றோன். It was a society ruled from within where modern external forces such as the Police and Army were indeed redundant.

70) மகன்தந்தைக் காற்றும் உதவி இவன்தந்தை
என்னோற்றான் கொல்லெனுஞ் சொல்.

To the father the son's duty lies,
A debt indeed for fulfilment that
Society should acclaim,
"What merit is his indeed to deserve such son!"

This kural gives emphasis to the accepted norm that children are an inheritance and their worth is the measure of paternal worth carried into the past. A father deserves a son and that only as being worthy if he has his past deeds to support.

The begetting of children is the payment of a debt on one side. Marriage therefore involved a common interest in social fulfilment, not as understood today to be one meant solely for pleasure and which is entirely individualistic.

The son's duty was to keep unsullied the Tradition which over many millennia had been found befitting the social order. Hence, what went before as the father's own inheritance had to be carried on with due regard and acceptance. Whatever the son did contributed to the traditional order. There were deep and abiding principles which carried forward the traditional order unlike the modern which robs everything of the abiding because it confines itself to things of the senses and the world of matter. That is why even in a socialist society such as Russia it has been found difficult to deal with corruption, alcoholism,

bribe taking, profiteering, embezzlement and abuse of power. In a Kremlin speech to the People's Controllers' Conference on 6th October, 1984 the Soviet President Chernenko referred to this pointedly. He was speaking to the Volunteer Sentinels of Work and Society.

The Tamil society spoken of by Valluvar was an exalted order which would never have thought of such evils. The modern world is a rupture with Tradition and in 'pragmatism' has been found the way of substituting "utility" for truth. As Rene Guenon has commented, "If a Western intellectual elite comes to be formed, a genuine knowledge of Eastern doctrines will be essential to the fulfilment of its functions" *

* (P. 22 "Crisis of the Modern World.")

CHAPTER - 8

அன்புடைமை

THE CONCEPT OF LOVE

Valluvar gives great emphasis to love as a human quality which derives its substance from the very inner being. In love is the very surrender of the ego needed for goals of a social order based entirely on discipline and self-surrender. That very meaning is conveyed in the title to this Chapter - "the begetting and securing of love" அன்பு உடைமை.

This chapter embraces four categories (1) The nature of love (2) the value and benefit accruing through birth which is the truth of love only (3) the function and necessity of love in household tasks (4) the resulting suffering caused by lack of love.

To see, feel and respond to the suffering of others is the proper function of love. A frame or body without

love is lifeless, like a tree without sap undergoing the process of death. In household life is love generated because therein is maximum self-surrender. In love is an eternal spring which cannot be withheld. The absence of love is the breeding ground of self - interest. The very association of life with the body is for the function and fulfilment of love. Without it the body is just a bony framework covered with skin. Therefore of what use is the outer framework called the body? The highest happiness is reached only in love's fulfilment.. It is needed in all circumstances—good or evil. Like how the sun dries up the flesh without bones, **Aram** dries up the bodily framework devoid of love. In such inwardly felt and poignant ways Valluvar seeks to give importance to love in the human being.

That love Valluvar takes into all fields of life—social economic and religious. Any sociological and economic base for society stripped of love and self-surrender, yields way to State power—the withering away of which becomes the ideal of the socialist state. Tamil tradition represented the highest idea of the Marxist State but leaving no room for naive presumptions of what are called transcendental and divine things. The discovery of the psyche in modern psychology has now led the way to the comprehension of love in terms of Valluvar's denominator.

The over-valuation given to the physical and mental has made contemporary reason lack **pneuma** or spiritual orientation. Like the blind man leading the blind with somnambulist certainty into the ditch, the spirit without love has entered on the path of devaluation of the psyche. Our empirical psyche is motivated only by desire of the, flesh,—hunger, power and sex as C. G. Jung describes the large numbers to-day who atomize themselves to become thieves and robbers only. "He is infected with the leprocy

of collective thinking and has become an inmate of the insalubrious stud-farm called the totatitarian State" †

St. Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians gives charity—(corrupted today into "love")—the proper meaning that without it we are "become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal".

The whole content of divinity is love given expression for example by Thirumoolar that Siva and Love are one. (Thirumanthram 270). அன்பே சிவமாய் அமர்ந்திருந்தாரே.

இன்பமும் பொருளும் அறனும் என்றாங்கு
அன்பொடு புணர்ந்த ஐந்திணை,

(தொல். பொருள், கள.1)

71) அன்பிற்கும் உண்டோ அடைக்குந்தாழ் ஆர்வலர்
புன்கணீர் பூசல் தரும்.

What barrier is there
To debar Love's outpouring?
The tears that well from within
Proclaim the proof thereof.

Love is a spontaneous, irrepressible urge especially where it flows out of complete self-surrender. There can be no trace of the ego in it and the moment the ego intrudes there is no love but greed and avarice. Such is the love of the miser for his hoard or of the merchantman and exploiter for the surplus value.

In the words of St. Paul, "Charity (love) suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up .... Beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things, charity never faileth." Else-

† (Page. 164 - "Mysterium Coniunctionis")

where, he says, "Flesh and bood cannot inherit the kingdom of God".

The world is a vale of tears, says the Latin poet, and it touches the human mind - (**'Sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt'**). The witness to inward feeling is the tear, An English poet gives expression to the idea : "Oh eyes, no eyes, but fountain frought with tears."

True love is associated with feeling—a welling up of uncontrolled affection and sympathy for others. There is no bar to the outpourings, none that can close the gates of love.

72) அன்பிலார் எல்லாம் தமக்குரியர் அன்புடையார்
என்பும் உரியர் பிறர்க்கு.

They live only for themselves,
They who are bereft of love.
Those who possess love,
Their very bones are other's.

Here is a powerful cry for self-surrender which is the only way of love. Just as the air encompasses the earth, the soul whose attribute is love, is wrapped round the earth. The spirit belongs to Truth and Truth is born out of love. The image of love is innate in man as the soul's motions are governed by the spirit of truth.

Denied the use of love man becomes beastly as the modern industrial - commercial man has well-nigh become. Until the Western impact and the death blow of industrialism on Tamil life, there was understanding of the meaning of அன்பு love. Today it is lost in the haze or blindness of self - interest which **laizse faire,** commerce and industry have implanted.

The powerful technologies, bigger cities, faster transport mass education and the like, the political thinking and and in-fighting, the squabbles in political and other levels flow not from the beat of the heart but of the machine. Love had been stored in the vein of old traditions. In place is standardisation and mass-production whilst truth has descended to the level of facts and data. It is an oppressive and dreary world—that produced by industry and commerce—so that the love in the sense expressed here by Valluvar carries no meaning for the contemporary world. Human love has been exchanged for the love of standardisation, concentration and specialisation of the bureaucracy. Men have been compelled to live in squalor and disorder and, being so accustomed to this, they are unaware of it. The questions are there and the answers are self-evident, as T. S. Eliot has handled the modern enigma :

"I think we are in rat's alley
Where the dead men lost their bones;
'What is that noise ?
The wind under the door,
'What is that noise now?
What is the wind doing?
Nothing again, nothing'.

73) அன்போ டியைந்த வழக்கென்ப ஆருயிர்க்
கென்போ டியைந்த தொடர்பு.
Life indeed, they say who know.
Hath taken abode in love
That it may again taste
The fruits of union with Love.

Here Valluvar emphasises the role of love in life because without it the purpose of existence is lost. One's coming into being is to share and experience love, not to be just encased in bone with no realisation of fulfilment or destiny. Destiny has a divine purpose in love's own path. Man

never wishes to be encompassed in a dark night where all things become undertain and fear grips. There is a reality in the psyche, but not in body or the bone. Love fills life with the things that are important **sub specie aeternitatis** in the same way as it provides for the ordered society of Tradition which Valluvar here expresses so clearly and lucidly.

Without love, life becomes barren—a bony expressionless thing. There is a Divine Law நீதி guiding the way of love and the body is an instrument to achieve that end and nothing more. The union of life and body gives love the channel of achieving the ends of the existence which were defined as divine.

Life in Tradition was not something sought in Jerusalam and not found. Through the path of love, it enabled man to "see face to face" and not "through a glass darkly".

74) அன்பீனும் ஆர்வம் உடைமை அதுவீனும்
நண்பென்னும் நாடாச் சிறப்பு.

Love begets reverence for all;
In turn, that yields
In friendliness alone
A priceless treasure.

The word உடைமை **Udaimai** in Tamil means and includes all that one wishes to have and indeed does possess in the world. Extended metaphysically உடையான் **Udaiyan** meaning **One** who possesses and has the right to possess, namely Siva, is said to be in one's being. That He alone possesses and has the right to possess is brought out clearly by the mystics— see உடையநாதனே போற்றி (Thiruvasagam).

நட்பு is more than friendship and implies understanding and accord of a deeper kind.

Love begets a sense of unity and defeats the ego which is both ambivalent and ambiguous. In love is the recognition of a polarity in things that do not belong to it and therefore it becomes the superior. Love provides for the unity of the personality where there is freedom from entanglement in life's dichotomies.

Anything other than love is unsuitable for human relationship which can only be based on friendship and understanding.

75) அன்புற்றமர்ந்த வழக்கென்ப வையகத்
தின்புற்றார் எய்துஞ் சிறப்பு.

Through household path,
They say, doth love lie;
Earthly love indeed
Leads on to heavenly bliss.

The concept of earthly and heavenly love is brought out in Saiva Mystic poetry especially of Manikkavasagar vide **Thiruvasagam** and **Thirukovaiyur**. There is a spiritual significance in earthly love understood from the first meeting of the eyes to the ultimate state of self-oblivion. The soul has a timeless relation when united in love with the heavenly. To have knowledge of Ideal Beauty calls for a rectification of the whole personality. To have vision of one's Being is to repeat the process of creation and Beauty is in knowledge of the Ever-Present. Heaven and Earth are united in heavenly bliss which, unlike the earthly, is not transient.

From the household is the way to heaven where the mind of the Sage is rooted. In that state of repose or union it becomes the speculum of all creation. Heavenly love is without desire and it becomes the goal in the evolutionary process. Desire fades away when there is love.

76) அறத்திற்கே அன்புசார் பென்ப அறியார்
மறத்திற்கும் அஃதே துணை.

'Love is for **aram** only',
Say the ignorant;
Even against evil
Love alone is ally.

Here the opposite states of **aram** and **maram** are brought together through the love that transcends. The modern man will find difficulty in understanding **aram** and **maram** because, for him, nothing exists except what can be seen and touched.

Valluvar stressed **aram** earlier to bring human life in line with a traditional order. Where commerce and trade hold sway over men's minds because modern science can speak only of a **de facto** materialism, there is difficulty in pulling people out of the realm of the senses. Wanting to grasp everything by the senses, they take pride in being pragmatic and thus become part and parcel of the declining process leading to a complete indifference to truth. Progress therefore means the continual perfecting of the engines of war which envisages only mass destruction.

Aram has received special treatment by Valluvar already in Chapter 4. Hence no confusion need arise. Its all-embracing character is brought out here in the form of love or அன்பு. When love is seated at the centre it usurps the ego and impoverishes the outer world with which the ego is preoccupied. In the confrontation of opposites love (அன்பு) reconciles and finds a **modus vivendi** for the self in the path of **aram**. It is **anpu** (அன்பு) that prevents life getting entangled in the dichotomies of the opposites which threaten the unity of the personality.

There is a polarity between **aram** and **maram** as in all living things. The inner polarity of the psyche too has

its opposites but there is an energy proceeding from the opposition which is numinous. Love as it moves away from the profane proceeds to the sacred and cosmogonic and therefore ceases not until it becomes god - like. At this point alone is there freedom to choose between truth and error.

By '**maram**' (மறம்) was generally meant heroism and Sangam poetry too conveys this connotation. To extirpate the chaos of the irrational calls for abiding love because momentary happenings only carry with them the quality of the irrational moments. It is only the hero in the battlefield who lives to understand the meaning of love and fulfilment.

Heroism is needed to widen consciousness and love enters where it is necessary to retain the inner roots To preserve the living psychic organism of individuals calls for a war of sorts. That means the call to grow out of mere individual identity based on ego consciousness. The battle through life with motives other than self - interest calls for great heroism - a fearlessness of death as stated in Thirumanthiram - 1624 :

"ஒடுங்கி நிலை பெற்ற உத்தமர் உள்ளம்
நடுங்குவதில்லை நமனுமங் கில்லை
இடும்புகள் இல்லை இராப்பகல் இல்லை
கடும்பசி இல்லை கற்றுணர்ந் தார்க்கே"

"For those exalted and in thought one-pointed
Fear there is none, nor doth death enter;
No dangers they apprehend—neither darkness nor light,
No pangs of hunger for them—realised they indeed
are in learning".

Thus is implied a revolution, an inner division as well as overthrow of the existing order in order to strike upon

the frontiers of the unconscious. It means at the present time the need to break away so that the frightfu and hideous nature of the world created by man's avarice is obliterated. Evil is ever-present and aggressive in the same way as the good and great courage - **maram** - is needed to be summoned against both. Jung puts it appositely: "We quite forget that we can be as deplorably overcome by a virtue as by a vice. There is a sort of frenzied, orgiastic virtuousness which is just as infamous as a vice and leads to just as much injustice and violence."*

Aram gives as much meaning to **love** as in the war to preserve it. Thus anything human is relative and in all things there is an inner polarity.

77) என்பி லதனை வெயில்போலக் காயுமே
அன்பி லதனை அறம்.

The sun doth burn
The boneless creature—
So doth Aram burn
The one without love.

In the same way as the sun illuminates the physical world, **Aram** illumines the being on the path of fulfilment. The sun also burns the boneless creatures such as worms which protect themselves under the earth. **Aram** too burns where love is absent. Here the contrast is effective because **Aram** is retributive where there is transgression. **Aram** reflects a pervading Divine Justice which is not visible on the surface. It is part of the reality giving evidence of the immanence of the absolute. In the false world of everday experience, it is the real substrate and in the Tamil Tradition **Aram** is the one and only guiding factor to life on earth without which the edifice of life and social relationship collapses.

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* (**Symbols of Transformation** (1952) Original Version (1912). **Wandlungen and Symboleder Libido**)

Aram is something that governs because its nature is that of illumination. It can also burn where it is inimicable to life. The human mind has a profound and supra-personal continuity and this can only be viewed in the light of **aram**.

In **aram** too there is a conscience. In a different context Jung gives the proper meaning psychologically :

"There would appear to be a sort of conscience in mankind which severely punishes every one who does not somehow and at sometime, at whatever cost to his virtuous pride, cease to defend and assert himself, and instead confess himself fallible and human. Until he can do this, an impenetrable wall shuts him off from the vital feeling that he is a man among other men." ‡

In **aram** is a metaphysical projection which speaks of the supremacy of the Self. It has no relationship whatsoever to forms of morality. The act of burning is to confront a person with his shadow to enable him to stand between the opposites. **Aram** has power to break, blow and make new whereupon the ego is made willing to grant the self its rightful personality. Without love there is more danger today to the world from what Jung calls are "the damned-up instinctual forces in civilized man." He says, "No war of the historical past can rival in grandiose horror the wars of civilized nations. "*

78) அன்பகத் தில்லா உயிர்வாழ்க்கை வன்பாற் கண்
வற்றல் மரந்தளிர்த் தற்று.

A life without love's inner guide
Is like unto a dried tree
In a desert waste - land
Sprouting to life.

‡ "Principles of Practical Psychotherapy" (1935). In Collected Works 16. Page 132)

* "Page 230 Collected Works 6. 1970 - Chapter on **Psychological Types** (1921).

Love alone brings about an abundance of the bestowing virtue on which the life of man can subsist, according to the Tamil Tradition.

Life has a source of unity and inter-dependence which, if it is to fulfil its function, has to take the path of love. Without love, life becomes a barren and desert-like-'Waste land' as seen by T. S. Eliot where the "dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief "And the dry stone no sound of water".

Eliot in a great way depicts the predicament of man in the modern world-the agony and horror of modern life, the filth and fog common to all who know the industrial and commercial cities :

"Men and bits of paper, whirled by the cold wind
That blows before and after time,
Wind in and out of unwholesome lungs
Time before and lime after".

It is a life shorn of love where men "spit out all the but - ends" of their "days and ways". In a more effective way Eliot feels that "we are in rats' alley where the dead men lost their bones".

Valluvar's statement is the positive affirmation. Love to him is the most efficacious and without it nothing can be effective or worthwhile. A life shorn of meaning it will be. The Tamil Tradition reflected the peak of human perfectability in love and Valluvar explains it all here in incomparable and majestic ways.

79) புறத்துறுப் பெல்லாம் எவன் செய்யும் யாக்கை
அகத்துறுப் பன்பி லவர்க்கு.

Limbs external,
Of what avail are they,
If love, which constitutes the inner,
Is absent?

Love is the sun which illumines the being. It is like the eye and heart of the sensible world. For the empirical man with swollen ego feelings, love does not matter but for the inner man, in so far as he is divine, we should speak of a theophany in which there is the spiritual, the psychic and the earthly. That which is made in such a person is Life.

Here Valluvar puts an end to the mere ego-bound existence where the darkness cannot comprehend light. The celestial balsam or life principle is love in which alone is a logic for the opposites to unite. It is freed from the opposites whilst projecting a transcendental **Unus mundus.** It is love alone which can strip off the veils of illusion so that one need not have to face one's own darkness. It enables "the governance of the soul's motions by the spirit of truth."

Limbs external are there only to help in gaining one-self from the things that manacle from inside. There is need to escape from the stifling grip of one-sidedness. The inner man is Love and that alone is capable of redemption and that alone can free the body of corruptibility. The experience of the self is in love which is always a defeat for the ego.

The very admission to-day that there is no knowledge beyond what proceeds from the senses rejects the concept of Love as a transcendent power. The external limbs of action have created only disorderly appetites in the masses. What confronts mankind today is only the brute force of matter and the modern disorder really stems from the West.

80) அன்பின் வழிய துயிர்நிலை அஃதிலார்க்
கென்புதோல் போர்த்த உடம்பு.

Those whose life doth not
In love reside,
Verily! for body have!
Bone enclosed in skin.

This is a powerful indictment of the lifeless existence. In the modern world love is an illusion saturated as it is with the physical merely. A mechanised society has also mechanised love like the three Thames' daughters of Eliot who 'can connect nothing', with nothing and who can make no sense at all of their seduction'.

The imagery of 'love enclosed in skin' is a premonition of an Eliot to come:

"But at my back in a cold blast I hear
The rattle of the bones, the chuckle
spread from ear to ear"

To be joined in flesh and blood is to be united in love and that is the only way to stand up as living men.

Valluvar drives home the truth that it is Love which gives meaning to life whilst at the same time providing for its greatest development. The truth is nothing if it cannot live and it is love that supports and nourishes the life in truth.

The mass-man of today is an arrogant and woolly-minded product so that he is unable to give himself up to the spirit of love. All others supports except those that spring from love are bony, lifeless and even odious. The world revealed by the senses is distorted and one-sided, not the world sprung out of love. If the past is to become alive to be able to participate in the present, it has to express itself through love.

To create order out of the chaos of individual events, one has to take possession of the conscious mind. In love there is neither blind faith, nor intellectual rationalism but love alone provides the awakening in the spirit needed for the fullness of life. Love alone is an experience within human reach which ultimately shows the way of liberation — a point brought out in the 12th **sutram** of **Siva-gnana-potham** of Meikanda Thevar. It leads the way to **Pathi-gnanam** --a knowledge superior to that secured by the senses.

Divine love is the highest co-ordinate அன்பரொருமரிஇ and it is the highest point to be reached in the struggle to liberate oneself.

The Industrial-commercial man suffers from himself because of the externalization of life. The worship today of genius, for example, does not take into account the fact that a genius is more often without a personality. The totality of man is both his conscious and unconscious contents and the movement of progress is towards the assimilation of the ego. That is the only way to the growth of a wider personality. Here love alone shows the way.

CHAPTER - IX

விருந்தோம்பல்

HOUSEHOLD HOSPITALITY

The word **விருந்தோம்பல்** used by Valluvar as title to this Chapter brings to focus two things - the household state which has already been referred to and hospitality or rather the love that belongs to particular state of householder. The word is compounded of two - **விருந்து**, meaning others besides those of the household who need to be fed, and ஓம்பல் meaning to observe the traditional and enjoined practice. The latter calls for surrender of the ego in feeding those who come to one's door because it is always the

worthy and deserving who come. Attention to them therefore becomes a sacred rite and a prime duty for the householder. That action was the very pulse-beat that marked one's life.

Of the ten kurals assigned to this Chapter, the first six speak of the excellence of the virtue of household feeding and hospitality, the seventh speaks of the manner of feeding guests, the eighth and ninth of the evil and shame in not feeding and the tenth on the benefit accruing to one from the practice of household hospitality.

In this Chapter is brought to focus the central element in Tamil Tradition that one's life should be a total surrender if it is to be effective and purposive. The self is not the ego but a consciousness like the sun which represents the daylight of the psyche. The luminosity of the self accepts everything except the incoherence, shabbiness and emptiness of a loveless, infertile world.

Indeed, to prevent the present-day transformation even in Tamil Nadu society, Valluvar cautioned against the evils of a loveless life. The world is witness enough to the dreariness, desolation as well as the aesthetic and spiritual drouth of modern industrial and commercial societies They produce a weariness down the soul and engage in labour the products of which are unprofitable. The shattered institutions, bankrupt ideals and strained nerves are fit enough only for the sound of phonographs. We see before us a dry-rotted world emerging out of a crazy city life.

The dilemma of the modern world is the dilemma of the lack of love which presents the ugliness, boredom and terror that lurk in all societies and classes. Valluvar's awareness of the on-coming dangers is his pointer to the skin and bone which he foresaw would be the result of a loveless life. It is important to note this Chapter on love as an unfolding of

Truth, dramatically, lyrically and with musical skill. It is therefore for many reasons untranslatable except that we have in the effort collected a broken bundle of mirrors and a heap of broken images in trying to fit Kural to our thoughts and fancies.

81) இருந்தோம்பி இல்வாழ்வ தெல்லாம் விருந்தோம்பி
வேளாண்மை செய்தற் பொருட்டு,

The household state to live
Therein to gather worldly goods
That's door indeed to hospitality;
The path of surrender in charity.

The house இல் holds within it the thought only of giving and surrender. To be a householder calls for a state of surrender where both man and woman are bound in love to cherish and perpetuate. The word in Tamil for agriculture வேளாண்மை has the connotation only of giving and not of appropriating to oneself. Agriculture is at present therefore no longer conceived of as a culture. In the very act of harvesting is the benevolence of giving. Today the agriculturist has degenerated to the state of labourer - his labour enriches the parasite whilst the pressure of poverty pushes him to eventual pauperism.

The Tamil Tradition never permitted exploitation because it was based entirely on self-surrender. The anarchic, discontented, rapacious thing in modern man has no relationship whatsoever to Tradition because here was something firmly established as a form of civilisation possessing its own strength and stability. The spirit and earth are superpersonal factors like the mystery of the American earth to the Red Indian. The relationship of man to earth is also the relationship of mind to body. In Jung's own words : "The principal and indeed the only thing that is wrong with the world is man".

It is necessary to understand the meaning of Il (இல்) in Tamil so that it is easier to follow the functions of householder as understood in Tamil tradition and emphasised as **a sine qua non** by Valluvar.

It was the individual that made the community called Tamil and by society was meant basically the individual identified in இல் or home Today the word 'society' represents nothing more than a term carrying the idea of the symbiosis of a group of human beings. Their functions are for the most part individualistic and selfish. On the other hand where the individual in the Tamil tradition went, he represented something, if not all, of nature and therefore became the sole and natural carrier of life.

Today the individual is an ego-personality differentiated from collective urges or drives. He is eternally discontented, anarchic and rapacious. Jung explains the situation correctly :

"No social legislation will ever be able to overcome the psychological differences between men, this most necessary factor for generating the vital energy of a human society. It may serve a useful purpose, therefore, to speak of the heterogeneity of men. These differences involve such different requirements for happiness that no legislation, however perfect, could afford them even approximate satisfaction. No outward form of life could be deviced, however equitable and just it may appear, that, would not involve injustice for one or other human type. That, in spite of this, every kind of enthusiast—political social, philosophical and religious — is busily endeavouring to find those uniform external conditions which would bring with them greater opportunities for the happiness of all seems to me connected with a general attitude to life too exclusively oriented to the outer world."*

* (C. G. Jung "Psychological Types" (1921) Page 845 Collected Works 6, 1970).

The home or Il made the inner situation of the Tamil people conscious. They became conscious all the time of the inner opposite and thus were not torn into opposing halves. The meaning of this development is brought out forcibly in Thirumanthiram 1624 :

'ஒடுங்கி நிலை பெற்ற உத்தமர் உள்ளம்
நடுங்குவதில்லை நமனுமங் கில்லை
இடும்புகள் இல்லை இராப்பகல் இல்லை
கடும்பசி இல்லை கற்றுணர்ந்தார்க்கே

"The hearts of the exalted through self-realisation
one-pointed
Carry no fear : No place either for god of death, Yama;
No suffering holds; neither darkness nor light,
No hunger torments such learned and realized."

The society revered learning which was a vast compendium indeed so that as age advanced wisdom grew and bloomed. Today age is not revered because under modern conditions wisdom does not grow and that too with age. But Tamil education rooted in the very home enabled the recognition of the unconscious whilst taking an empirical view of the psyche's phenomenology. Tamil education in tradition breathed nature unlike the modern which lacks all contact with life. Age therefore reflected the growth of wisdom; hence Valluvar gave particular value to it in the understanding of **aram** :

"அறன் அறிந்து மூத்த அறிவுடையார் கேண்மை
திறன் அறிந்து தேர்ந்து கொளல்"

"The friendship of those matured
In **aram's** understanding
How this becomes thine own
Discern thou well and accept."

Today the world is sharply divided because there is no consciousness in it of the inner opposite. But education in Tamil was rooted in life itself and there in the very home.

The entire syllabus of education in **puram thinnais** was removed from crude or naked egoism as can be seen from the subjects emphasised right from **aththi-soodi** (ஆத்திசூடி) to **Pathinen-keerl-kanakku**) பதினெண்கீழ்கணக்கு)

The index gives the vast area covered and the texts prescribed)

The household called for the peak of discipline which expressed "the intrinsic and unconditioned creative power of the psyche". Unlike the mass education of today which for the most part inflates the ego, Tamil education in tradition sought to suppress it so that it became a total discipline involved in self-surrender. Charity was all that home life implied in the sense conveyed by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians (1-13). It brought to focus a clearly-lit world of the day - time leading into the protean way of the psyche which was altogether self-effaeing.

82) விருந்து புறத்தாத் தானுண்டல் சாவா
மருந்தெனினும் வேண்டற்பாற் றன்று.

With guests that stay outside
With oneself alone to eat,
Though be it life-giving nectar,
Is indeed not acceptable.

The words சாவா மருந்து denotes some medicine or food for immortality which most people would want to have at any cost. Even such a precious nectar of perpetual life is not to be consumed alone where others outside one's door need it. The thought of the other's needs is driven home as the first and valuable quality of household life.

The desire to live for oneself alone has a selfish end. It is the craze for ease and security as well as material welfare which is the curse of modern civilisation. This craze is found to be counter-productive and, having foresaken the spirit in man, produces only suffering and disillusion. There is a renewal always in the living spirit because it has the only goal and destiny outlined for man.

83) வருவிருந்து வைகலும் ஓம்புவான் வாழ்க்கை
பருவந்து பாழ்படுதல் இன்று.

The life of him in daily life
Who feeds his guests
Shall not, by gnawing poverty
Be laid waste.

The act of charity calls for action every moment and he who remains consistent and faithful despite vicissitudes is, according to divine law, never assailed by poverty. The truth of the spirit is emphasized here because anything that takes man away from life is false. It is the spirit that gives meaning and truth is found in the possibility of its greatest development.

The spirit which encompasses charity is one that is renewed eternally. It is shown here as never failing and as distinct from the false spirit of arrogance, and the shoddy spiritual values of the present day. The guiding principle of a householder's life is a consciousness of the indisputable authority which governs life.

The question has been asked and answered by Jung: "What would the Rabbi Jesus have taught if he had had to support a wife and children, if he had had to till the soil in which the bread he broke had grown, and weed the vineyard in which the wine he dispensed had ripened? The dark weight of the earth must enter into the picture of the whole" ‡

84) அகனமர்ந்து செய்யாள் உறையும் முகனமர்ந்து
நல்விருந் தோம்புவான் இல்.

Lakshmi, Goddess of Wealth,
Her abode will take
In household where hospitality resides
And worthy guests received.

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‡ (P. 268 - 'Psychological Reflections" edited by Jolandi-Jacobi).

There is a childish egoism in adult life if the purpose goes beyond the bounds of nature. Life is not to be entrenched in the outer world solely to propagate one's kind and care only for one's children. Lakshmi, the Goddess of Fortune, does not favour childish egoism to be carried into adult life. Naturally, modern societies are characterised by social failure. Childish greed has no place in mature age. The advance and wisdom in age is to be able to bid farewell to life through discipline of self-surrender.

The household has to take position as the centre where truth does not become stale or trite because truth's validity is where it suffers change. The household is where maturity resides and presides and where the desires of the animal world cannot drag down the higher values belonging to the spiritual sphere.

The householder was the universal man, not the empirical ego. The concept is different from the modern house where one sees only mass- degeneration of the personality. On a level, society has become to-day a torpid, mindless mass yielding slowly to State slavery stripped of any mental or spiritual charm. As Jung observes poignantly, "Instead of being at the mercy of wild beasts, earthquakes, landslides and inundations, modern man is battered by the elemental forces of his own psyche" †

The concept of private poverty ceased in the state of householder. Marx condemned it as "the necessary result, of **alienated labour**, of the external relation of the worker to Nature and to himself". Political economy as known to-day has, according to him, established an alienated form of social intercourse".

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† (P. 159 - "Psychologicaal Reflections").

Where the householder performed his traditional function was to give economics a framework of reference in life so that it elevated man and neither alienated nor suppressed him,

In this Kural it is good to take note of the usage நல்விருந்து meaning the worthy guest—one who has surrendered self-interest for realisation of the divine and ultimate purpose of life.

85) வித்தும் இடல்வேண்டுங் கொல்லோ விருந்தோம்பி
மிச்சில் மிசைவான் புலம்.

That householder who in duty
First feeds the guest
And keeps the crumbs to himself
His land, doth it need sowing ?

Charity knows no bounds in the household state. Life was never thought of as a mournful repetition nor as one to be stood apart from.

Tamil society had reached such perfectitude that the concept of private property had given way to a collective ideal and, instead of suffocation of the individual in selfish and undeveloped functions, he was able to develop the feeling of universal validity. His social and divine personality grew in the melieu of the home. The latter was the peak of an evolved society.

What Marx assails is the egoistic man who is the result of the dissolution of society. The Tamil society of tradition never traded in egoism but surrendered the ego to the self-less life of householder and that, among other liberated states, was not dependent on economics. Herein it was possible for the very stuff of human nature to be changed. Marx therefore said that "every emancipation is a restoration of the human world and human relationship to man himself".

86) செல்விருந் தோம்பி வருவிருந்து பார்த்திருப்பான்
நல்விருந்து வானத் தவர்க்கு.

He, ever-awaiting the guest —
The one having gone,
Longing for the other to follow —
Indeed is guest of heavenly hosts.

The action of a householder in feeding his guests is described as a never-failing duty. When one has gone, the other guest must follow so that the action is continuous and the vocation becomes meaningful. Feeeding the guest in Tradition is a sacred rite and no guest comes who is unworthy of the honour. The honour goes to where it is due - to the receiver as well as to the giver. The act of giving implies the act of receiving.

There is no promiscuity in this because the one who is honoured in hospitality inevitably is a highly-prized and worthy one. He is the living embodiment of the Truth that man does not live by bread alone. In the act of giving and receiving is the renewal of life - a new efflux of energy. It is a rebirth all the time into a state where truth is the goal of endeavour. Jung says that "rebirth is an affirmation that must be counted among the primordial affirmations of mankind".

All giving is a sacrifice because by giving oneself one possesses oneself. Giving is meant to be a loss because it is a sacrifice ; however there is a certainty that the egoistic claim can no longer exist.

The higher a man evolved to the liberated state, the less exacting were his demands on society and here the householder represented the society The Tradition in Tamil never created the parasitical class that industry and commerce have created over-night to-day. There were no have-nots because everybody had abundance of learning, wisdom, hard work and love of one's neighbour as the only binding force.

Machines and the like so much adored today are "the materialised power of knowledge", as Marx would say. But love and charity which should form the basis of any social organisation cannot be conceived of in material terms. They only can maintain the fullness of experience and realisation in society the more and more they revolt against materialism as an end. In the same way that the proletariat and wealth are antinomies, the concept of the modern family and the traditional household are distinct and apart. In the household were the seeds of love, in the family of to-day are seeds of revolt.

87) இனைத்துணைத் தென்பதொன் றில்லை விருந்தின்
துணைத்துணை வேள்விப் பயன்.

No measure there is indeed
Of the worth of hospitality.
The measure belongs indeed
To the guest solely

Here Valluvar brings home the idea of houehold hospitality as one of sacrifice or யாகம் meaning to make sacred. Anything done where the ego is effaced in subservience to the Self becomes a sacred rite. The entire function of the householder is based on a rite that is sacred. The life of ease and comfort in modern homes contrasts strongly with the concept of a traditional household where the living spirit was eternally renewed and the truth of life was as nothing if it could be lived.

We, who are so far renowned from Tradition, will have to strive hard to find the opposite of an actual situation to know the centre which was the யாகம் or sacrifice. It was மனிதாபம் and in Tradition there were other sacrifices as well—பிரமயாகம், தேவயாகம், பூதயாகம் and பிதிர்யாகம்.

மனிதாயம் leads to a Law or governance that gives meaning to the plenitude of life. We cannot rationalise culture without running into its opposite which as Jung says, "is the irrational devastation of culture". Since, as he observes, "the gods cannot and must not die, the irrational cannot be and must not be extirpated".

88) பரிந்தோம்பிப் பற்றற்றேம் என்பர் விருந்தோம்பி
வேள்வி தலைப்படா தார்.

> They who denied themselves benevolence in charity
> Will grieve indeed
> That wealth as support
> They laboured and hoarded.

In the word வேள்வி **Velvi** is meant giving as a sacrificial rite. Every act of giving to others is a sacred rite. In the world projected by Tradition there was more concern with animation of the soul for which the recipe was that man does not live by bread alone. From the point of view of modern psychology too a materialistic view of the world ill accords with the reality and autonomy of the psyche.

Here Valluvar makes the act of giving the sole discipline in life as against the greed and avarice involved in taking to one self the world's goods. The discipline involved was to free the soul from the fetters of the body) and the illusions that go with acquisition of wealth. That would be to face the Truth squarely rather than to face one's own darkness.

In the rush for wealth is the magnifying of the ego but, in the charity characterising the householder's life, the experience of the self was always a defeat for the ego.

Valluvar here gives the greatest emphasis to charity as the characteristic of Tamil household life. To those today who labour with acquiring and hearding wealth, the enunciation here of an eternal principle inviolable in nature no doubt appear repelling, if not alien.

89) உடைமையுள் இன்மை விருந்தோம்பல் ஓம்பா
மடமை மடவார்கண் உண்டு.

Failure to honour the grues
Is indeed poverty midst wealth.
Such ignorance
Only fools possess !

The possession of wealth without consciousness of its proper usage is a quality of poverty. In the use of wealth it is not the weal or woe of the possessor that matters as the life of the collective.

In Tamil Tradition the collective had a transcendent perception of life which extracted a world eternal from the temporal. The householder was the repository of a life that revealed the eternal truth. His personal destiny was in that of mankind and the regulative principles of his life were creative. He moulded the unconscious psychic life of the Tamil people and never would have dared introduce sterility and hopelessness into it.

In Tamil life there was no venom or bitterness and it became devastatingly real through actions unfolding through household duties. Modern man is in bondage to his instincts as an animal and more often is victim of the beast within. That was far from anything even dreamt of because, through growth and evolution, it was already known that love alone spurred action and it was such action alone as would at the soul.

The household was the haven for the tired body seeking fullness and fulfilment in liberation. It represented worldly wealth held in trust and the householder became the trustee. All along Valluvar seeks to emphasise this so that it is clear he leaves no ambiguity where the functions of the household meant.

90) மோப்பக் குழையும் அனிச்சம் முகந்திரிந்து
நோக்கக் குழையும் விருந்து.

The **annichcham** flower
On very smell doth fade ;
The guest doth sour
On mere look.

The householder's calling is inward and therefore without pretence or humbug. The duty is not enjoined but stems from inner realisation of the role of the household state in the evolution and perfectibility of society. It was both a material and spiritual function inwardly understood as a calling.

A temporal world it was but, based on the eternal, it was able to enthrall and empower. It produced a life from the storehouse of eternity. Its social significance was that it took man to the deepest springs of life which revolutions of the present day cannot achieve because they lack the same disciplined goals and fulfilment.

We face a delusion-ridden world filled with fanaticism and ignorance. The Tamil household was a real world where life's goal was realised in charity and self-surrender. The demands of life were heroic and there was nothing of the pull of the modern world's humdrum existence. Today there is ever-increasing bondage through endless love of possession. The in call Tamil society was that of surrender and sacrifice. We have inherited what psychologists would call are complexes which we are unable to get rid of. Our enemy is right within our very heart.

This Chapter ends one phase of Valluvar's explanation of the basis of Tamil thinking and life in terms of a very ancient Tradition. The copious literature in poetry and music which constitute Sangam literature would lend support to Valluvar's thesis here presented.

EPILOGUE

This portion embracing 90 **Kurals** forming Part - I of the series on Thirukkural is intended mainly to embody the doctrine of religious life based on **Aram.** This doctrine needs more comprehensive study so that the remaining **Kurals** would suitably fit into the theme already brought out in this book.

The universality and immense antiquity of the Tamil Tradition has to be understood outside the norms of modern research. The latter has been responsible for debasing and even more of falsifying the study and approach to **Kural** by making it serve the ends of what are called 'ethics'. *It was therefore to seize the present* heedlessly thus burdendning ourselves with tormenting and needless attitudes. What was needed was the intervention of the Soul to prevent all ruminating fancies of modern study and criticism especially where it comes to a language such as Tamil. English translators and interpretors of **Kural** have displayed a blindness without parallel. In the moral approach has been a sinfulness destroying not merely the unity of Tamil Nadu but of mankind.

Valluvar is the only interpreter **par excellance** of a way of life given to man anywhere in which he will not be plagued by anarchy or rigicide. He voiced aloud from the very depths of the collective unconscious and he peered into it as no other, past or present, has done. He gave the proper understanding of the aim and meaning of life— the aim being mainly to reach *deliverance from* the opposites and the *meaning* to know that there was a way to that fulfilment.

In **Aram** was found the release from the fluctuations of affects because the Self of mankind was there. He did not speak of an external holy life of prayer and meditation but one of work and self - surrender towards the goal of an

Universal Love Principle. It was the whole of the human personality which was called into being like a spring gushing from its source. A long drought in human lif and perceptions is here broken.

Valluvar iuterpreted the life that was in humanity which gave very little opportunity for backsliding. The severity of the demands were never considered because the experience derived was enriching. One thing was know that crude egoism could never be the support of life nor could life's optimum be got through it. God, if ever understood was the universal Self, and godliness was to be realised **here and now.**

Kural can be broadly brought under three categories— **Aram** அறம், **Porul** பொருள், and **Inpam** இன்பம். This book has attempted to give an insight into **Aram** in the light of Tradition. The present world is so alienated from that Tradition that elaboration was necessary as far as that was possible in the English language. The First Chapter in praise of God called for more detailed analysis beeause the Tamil man's understanding of God was far removed from the anthropomorphic. Rather, the impact of Aryan influence and still more of the Western has been to make way for anthropomorphism in Tamil which is one reason for the present alienation and dichotomy in Tamilian life. That has been indeed a sad development which therefore gives more valid reason why this book has to cover the broad classification drawn from just 90 **Kurals.** **Aram** so far treated shabbily by translators and commentators as **Dharma** had to be rescued to its proper meaning and application. It was a living truth because it pervaded the household— a distinct thing from the modern house or home.

Research is now therefore necessary into the concept of a dwelling house properly to give meaning and expression to the practice of **aram.** The old houses in rural Tamil

Nadu still carry memories of the meaning attached to இல் or household without which it would have been impossible to practice **Aram.** Modern houses leading up to multi-storied flats are therefore a mockery of tradition.

The use of **aram** in Valluvar's Kural is distinct from the popular rendering as **Dharma** which is Aryan and therefore metaphysical entirely. The latter is psychologically the unconscious and even connected to the supernatural. **Aram** is a whole way of life linking inner perception with outer action. It is the only defence against any chaotic dependence on instincts and affects. Rather it enables the mastering of these. It breaks down all ill-discipline in the social order and formulates laws and disciplines that set up a process accomplishing itself. **Aram** is a great instrument of discipline to transform the whole social order and to serve as a bridge to one's neighbour. In short it is the only way of self-realisation through consciousness of the Self in all beings.

The Tamil people's social and economic life is best understood through **Kural.** The portions to follow set apart for fundamental concepts in economics and social adjustment have given mankind the goals of economic and social endeavour. A world now being seriously wounded by economic laws needs direction by a force outside these laws. Valluvar feels the pulse of humanity so accurately that he knows how societies can live wholesomely without dependence on economics solely. Man rises above the pulls of demand and supply which today are left to sinister forces over which no control is possible. Marx revolted against these forces and left it to a revolutionary State to bring about change. It meant a violent transformation since the greed of man in modern capitalist societies has become

insatiable. We are therefore confronted with violent external changes which in their turn can be counter - productive.

The whole impact of **Kural** in modern societies can be wholesome only if it is possible to translate the meaning of Tamil Tradition in terms of modern terminology. That means hard effort at stressing the first principles in the life of man — in this instance in the field of economic and social behaviour.

In the householder was a conscious inner life reflected in outward worldly action. He was the defence against anything chaotic because he was able to master all instincts and affects and thus bring forth a wondrous wealth of love.

The veiled and thinly veiled egotistic motives of the subsequent Aryan controlled life in Tamil territory was never present in the purely Dravidian context. It was the peak of development that any human order could have reached. In terms of psychology it could be said that there were no differentiated affects to cause any easy, unconcerned and superficial life in the purely Tamilian Tradition. The society was built over many millennia of trial and error through proper reflection and reconstruction. The good had been detached as the man was from his shadow. Being rooted in the deeper nature of man—Tamil and Saiva Siththantham—life's passage was laid on well thought-out motivation. There was no death but surrender of the individual ego leading to the final surrender of the Self meaning thereby losing the counterweight of the persona.

The **Kural** was considered among the Tamil people as "The Truth", the Veda or தமிழ் மறை. It is different from the Veda, the immemorial **(sanatana)** or timeless of the Upanishads. Being a guide to rectitude and right conduct as would ensure the continuity of **Aram**, it codifies traditional values. Since a sacred tradition can degenerate in the

profanity of the historical process, Valluvar codified the basic traditional values.

Due mainly to external and extraneous factors there was difficulty in continuing the peaceful and ordered life enjoined through **Aram**. Today the decline is visibly portrayed in the conflict between thought and life on one hand and complete alienation on the other. The affliction is a sort of schizophrenia so much so that what has been life itself has been relegated to the mean level of ethical and moral aphorism. Commentators who failed to perceive the wider significance of **Kural** and its application equally to all mankind, have conveniently termed the **Kural** as a book of maxims.

Consequent to this restricted or naive approach the early translations such as those of Constantius Beschi, W. H. Drew and Rev. G. U. Pope do not bring out the full substance of the Kural. Even the later ones have followed the approach of their predecessors in order to bring to the 'decadent' West the mysteries of the East.

No perfect translation of the **Kural** is possible. All persons' beliefs and dogmas could be said to find significance in the **Kural** as it is of universal application. In it are found expositions which could be termed principial in every traditional civilization. Such translations as have so far attempted to attach a system or circumscribe a set of theories depending on the translators' pre-dispositions—even though there may be the desire to be original at all cost—have resulted in truth being sacrificed to originally. It is this pseudo-metaphysical approach to things traditional which has caused so much harm for it has been found that to achieve the reputation of a philosopher, "it may be often be better to invent a new error than to repeat a truth already observed by others."

The Christian translators did a further disservice by using the Kural for their own missionary ends and by careful arrangement of the chronology of the author's birth to show that "without doubt Christian influences most affected him.............. We see in Thiruvalluvar a noble, truth-loving and devout man, feeling in the darkness after God, if haply he might find him." - (G.U. Pope). These early missionaries fixed Valluvar to the period of the first missionary St. Thomas who reached Madras about 800 A.D.

They forgot that the Aram of which Valluvar was the later expositor, prevailed throughout India long time before the birth of Christ and in the recorded history of Tamil literature goes back to nearly 6,000 B.C. It is enough to refer to 'Thiru Manthiram' of Thirumoolar which belonged to this early era and from which a great part of the Kural diction and thought have come in order to reject such false hypothesis.

Valluvar retained the fundamental Varnashramas - (the appropriate law and conduct of each class) - of Indian social theory as initiative or pupilary and not in the form of a hierarchic tradition. It was found in practice that the latter tradition—the Indo- Iranian—had in Nothern India already become somewhat ossified. It was against this tradition that the Buddha revolted. For did not the Buddha himself, a Kshatriya, become a sanyasin against the hierarchic tradition of which he was a part?

Valluvar therefore broadly confined the four Ashrams (Brahmachariya, Grihasta, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa) to two—known in Tamil as இல்லறம் (that of the householder) and துறவறம் (that of the sanyasin or voluntary outcaste).

He no doubt enunciated the Kshatriya and Vyshya Dharmas which existed and had to exist as institutional and functional divisions. The four states of being become in the main two — the outward path (pravriti) and the inward path

(nivriti). All four ashramas took only these two paths since the Dravidian tradition — the Sudra (the working class) and the Kshatriya (the ruling class)—had on the **nivriti** path to take the vow of voluntary poverty, of absolute self—dependence — that is to seek freedom from all external need.

The caste divisions were not those imposed on any person but were determined by his natural position in society. Valluvar says "the manner of birth is the same for all" பிறப்பொக்கும் எவ்வுயிர்க்கும் — Kural 972 – but the **measure** of greatness is to be true to one's own self (பெருமையும் தன்னைத்தான் கொண்டு ஒழுகின் உண்டு — Kural 974)

Why the **Kural** extols the state of householder (இல்வாழ் வான் or Grahasta is that this state ensures the greatest happiness consonant with freedom. It is the very being of human existence. The word for 'house' in Tamil means '**Release**' which is to release oneself from all ties and seek in the freedom of others one's own greater freedom.

Valluvar's own life which was that of householder is a beautiful example of that spiritual freedom which 'justifies no cult of ego-expression' and his wife 'Vasuki' was the ideal upholder of **Aram** known in India as the **'Dharma pathini'** or **'Sahadharmacharini**.. We who have become 'economic parasites' cannot see how it was possible for Tamil sociologists to conceive of marriage as a social and ethical relationship of two equals — (that is with identity of interest) — and 'the begetting of children the payment of a debt." In the traditional conception the integration of functional life was not by repudiation but by acceptance.

In the words of Ananda Coomaraswamy : "The ultimate purposes of Hindu social discipline are that men should unify their individuality with a wider and deeper than indi-

vidual life, should fulfill appointed tasks regardless of failure or success, distinguish the timeless from its shifting forms and escape the all-too- narrow prison of the 'I and mine.' Though the existence of Valluvar cannot be denied, his name is a fiction shrouded in anonymity — (this is in accord with the norm). To be such and such a one as Valluvar and such and such a one as Vasuki was the only reality.

To distinguish the 'temporal' from the 'spiritual' is the work of modern art. But that is not life. In Rene' Gue'-non's words; "It is only in the nineteenth century however that one finds men glorifying in their ignorance (since to call oneself an "agnostic" amounts to nothing else), and claiming to deny to others all knowledge of the things they themselves are ignorant of, and that stage marked a further step in the intellectual decline of the West."

The present age in the cycle known as **Kali Yuga** witnesses a period of much confusion and though in measure of time it is a fraction of a **Manvantra** — that 'day of Brahma' which consists of a thousand yugas or 4320 million years — whatever distortion traditional values suffer today is there in the nature of things.

The work that is undertaken here to give the **Kural** its 'modern' interpretation is merely an attempt to see the truth in the fullness of life's experience which is all that matters in things human.

This book would have been 'out of context' in the time of Valluvar because the way of life was self - evident to all. Today there is the need to 'interpret' something which was known and seen to be life itself but has been buried in the sands of time.

It is hard for us who are 'out of focus' of things 'historical' and are accustomed to the ordinary 'profane'

things which we name modern, to know anything of the genuine wisdom that persisted throughout the whole of India or of the undeniably initiatic character of the traditional order which gave meaning and fullness to human life.

It is the absence of principle which makes the modern world abnormal turning it into a kind of monstrosity and it is this principle or norm we are attempting to discover in this and publications to follow.

The **Kural** represents an identity with the collective psyche so brilliantly explained by Jung. He says it "always brings with it a feeling of universal validity— "goodlikeness"— which completely ignores all differences in the personal psyche of his fellows (The feeling of universal validity comes., of course, from the universality of the collective psyche.)" † In this the conflicts and differentiations which are found in modern societies are seen as abnormal to the generality of the social life engendered by Tamil Tradition. The evolution of Tamil thought and life was apart from the individualism of the kind prevailing today where self-interest inflates each individual's ego preventing its obliteration altogether.

The concept of a modern society in merely that of a symbiosis of human groups devoid of any collective drives. But Tamil in tradition promoted the social personality.

அறத்தான் வருவதே இன்பம் (**Kural** 39)
அறனெனப் பட்டதே இல்வாழ்க்கை (**Kural** 49)
செயற்பாலது ஓரும் அறனே (**Kural** 40)

Aram enjoined varied social, economic and religious duties which it was the duty of the King as Sovereign to see was implemented at the collective level of the units of settlement called **Ur** ஊர் (See Note—2)

* ("Psychological Reflections" P. 171)

Ur (ஊர்) in Tamil meant not just an identified and self-supporting settlement but gave expression to self-surrender for the well—being of all. In that well—being was a reflection which revealed the day-light of people's psychic consciousness. Each individual in turn became the sole and natural carrier of life as he was indeed designed to be by nature.

The ninety Kurals translated and interpreted in this work present in authentic from the Dravidian social, economic and religious life in all its integrality. It was a total culture dominated by the urge to be liberated from all that connects man to his ego. The Tamils alone knew that "the constitution of man is not a democracy, but the hierarchy of body, soul and spirit." In a different context Ananda Coomaraswamy expressed the meaning of a social order which embraced voluutary poverty as the sine qua non of growth and fulfilment. "It is easy," he says, "to see that in an indefinite multiplication of utilities, the means of life may end in an identification of culture with comfort, and the substitution of means for ends; to muitiply wants is to multiply man's servitude to his own machinery." *

The Tamil in tradition was a life in the state of nature which therefore made all immediate experience psychic. All things revealed a numinosity so that the household state was steeped in love and charity, There was no seeking after a life of ease and security which industrial—commercial life engenders. The Tamil revealed a flux or flowing into the future and thus it was possible to raise life's intensity to the highest pitch.

These ninety kurals are sufficient evidence of the meaningfulness that life can convery where there is fusion with the universal life force. In that life alone was realised

*(Essay on "Why Exhibit Work of Art ? " in "Christian and Oriental Philosophy of Art" Page 49).

an universal harmony for the social order and a **meaningfulness** for the **human entity** as **a** life **force** in the **creative** design. It called for **a** devotion to the universe **as a** cosmological design—**towards a love that expands.**

Every chapter here analysed presents a sequence which leads forward to depths of meaningfulness and **fulfilment.** Life in the **Ur** had a logos and hence the call was **all** the time there through the open door of hospitality **to** find the creative thing in life or rather the living thing implemented in the human psyche. The Tamil in education penetrated life and this too was made available at the entrance to every home—the **puram thinnais.** From childhood to old age the learning continued giving all that was majestic and beautiful in the vast domain of Tamil culture. The mind was all the time creative because it always played with the object it loved. It was immersion in the state of **participation mystique** which never could produce either a philistine or fool. Life thus became a work of artistic beauty as much as **a** household **kolam** had been,

Though the subject is of a different scope, it becomes necessary to have some glimpse of the education imparted in **puram thinnais.** These covered **kooththu (கூத்து), vari** (வரி) **perisai** (பேரிசை), **sit-isai (சிற்றிசை)**, **paththup-pattu** (பத்துப்பாட்டு) and **ettu-thohai (எட்டுத்தொகை).** The latter two were also known **as met-kanakku (மேற்கணக்கு).**

Under **Keerl-kanakku** (கீழ்கணக்கு) were **inna** (இன்னா), **iniyathu** (இனியது), **Kaar** (கார்) and Kalvaliz **(களவழி)** all consisting of 40 verses each. **Thiruk-kovaiyar** was part of the higher education syllabus but **Thiruvasaham** from the lips of the same mystic Manikkavasahar was not taught

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† (The feeling of universal validity comes., of course, from the universality of the collective psyche.)"

because it was in the memory of all the Tamil people. This is borne out even as late as 1900 by G. U. Pope in his translation of **Thiruvasaham.**

The education that was considered basic which embra-ced the above created a highly cultured and enlightened society capable of all the virtues of household life brought to focus in these **Kurals.** This was the society which idealistically can today be termed communist though, under modern conditions of industrial production, can at no stage be realised.

Kural comes under **Keerl—kanakku** (கீழ்க்கணக்கு) because it deals with **aram, porul** and **inpam.** The other cxts coming under this category were 17 in number thus making a total of 18. The seventeen were **Naladiyar** (நாலடியார்), **Nanmanik—kadihai** (நான்மணிக் கடிகை), **Iniyavainatpathu** (இனியவை நாற்பது), **Inna natpathu** (இன்னா நாற்பது), **Kaar natpathu** (கார் நாற்பது), **Kala—vazli—aiympathu** களவழி நாற்பது), **Aiynthinai Aimpathu** (ஐந்திணை ஐம்பது), **Thinai—molzli aiympathu** (திணைமொழி ஐம்பது), **Tirikadukam** (திரிகடுகம்); **Aasarak—kovai** (ஆசாரக்கோவை) **Pazla—mozli** (பழமொழி), **Siru—panja—moolam** (சிறு பஞ்ச மூலம்) **Kain—nilai** (கைந்நிலை) **Muthu—mozlik—kanch** (முதுமொழிக் காஞ்சி) and **Elathi** (ஏலாதி).

Thus there was developed a depth of vision and understanding through which was developed the collective psyche. The latter only was able to generate the feeling of universal vslidity where the ego become differentiated from collective drives. It was altogether different from today where the optimum of life is to to be found only in crude egoism. Tamil education in tradition gave no room for any descent into low impulses such as greed and avarice which are the inevitable by—products of modern educaiion, In Tamil tradition was great humility as the self became immersed in consciousness. There was no exaggerated self—confidence as today but the maturation of the personality as a whole.

The so-called creative impulse in the modern sense drains man of his personality so that he becomes ruthless, selfish and vain.

The tremendous growth in psychic consciousness in Tamil made even Tamil kingdoms such as the Pandyan those of Heaven on earth. Thus Manikkavasagar sings in **Thiruvasaham :**

"பாண்டி நாடே பழம் பதியாகவும்"!

(Keerthith—thiru—ahaval)

"தில்லையுட் கூத்தனே தென்பாண்டி நாட்டானே"

("Sivapuranam")

Kannagi showed what was the divine path of chastity even apart fram what the kingly order represented. In the divine justice done to Kannagi was a great fall for the Pandyan ruler but it interpreted divine justice as it belonged to **Then—pandi—nadu**. In the modern world which has lost sight of archetypal statements the meanings conveyed in the above are well—nigh lost. In Kannagi's **katpu** or chastity was the constancy of the idea of the self. That was the peak of Tamil development of a consciousness without an ego. In all that Valluvar speaks of there is the psyche as an autonomous factor. Thus **Kural** moves in a world not of any empirical kind but of images that point to something ineffable.

APPENDIX-I

THE CONCEPT OF THE DUALITIES IN SAIVA SITHTHANTHA

(Excerpts from paper read by author at the First International Seminar on Saiva Siththantham held at Dharmapura Atheenam on 12th May, 1984)

The Tamil tradition is the most ancient and, during all its many millennia of continuity, has found that the truth is outside the human mind and uot reposited in it as the modern world thinks.

It has to be admitted that, having set reason above anything else, we are confused not knowing that we are on the path of decline. Whilst moving from one rationalist concept to another, we have sunk into a kind of torpor and, in Tamilnadu especially, we have for the most part lost conciousness of our own tradition. That I consider is an unpardonable development for which remedial measures have to be found.

We have forgotten the doctrinal aspeot of Saivaism which means we have killed the springs of Tamilian life. Since we have bceome indifferent to everything pertaining to the doctrinal point of view, there is something equally self-destructive which on this occasion it is necessary for us to take note of. A question posed by Rene Gue'non would appear apposite in this context : "Knowledge enlightens action without participating in its vicissitudes; the spiritual guides the temporal without intermingling with it; and thus all things remain in their proper order, in the position assigned to them in the universal hierarchy; but where, in the modern world, is the notion of a true hierarchy to be met with?"

Today, as Gue'non says, it is the inferior who judges the superior. It is he who sets himself as the measure

of all things whilst claiming to dictate laws for the universe drawn entirely from his own limited and fallible reason. Thiruvalluvar speaks of a transcendent powder - தன் நெஞ்சம்- the Centre of one's being, which only is given the authority as universal dictate because that power alone is the Unmoved Mover :

> கெடுவல்யான் என்பதறிக தன் நெஞ்சம்
> நடுவொரீஇ அல்ல செயின்.

The result of our present involvements and activities is that, while we are at work we are doing what we like least because our standards of life have depreciated. As my own countryman Ananda Coomaraswamy, the world-renowned art critic has observed. "The life that we call civilised is more nearly an animal and mechanical life than a human. ("Why Exhibit Works of Art?").

The harmony and integration in Tamilian life stretching to millennia has been destroyed in a generation by the wtthering touch of modern civilization. The result is that business has today taken precedence of life.

Let us at this gathering set about thinking afresh so that changes can follow which will alter substantially our education systems which to say the least are both chaotic, if they are also not harmful and irrelevant.

It is necessary today to recapture Saivism and through it Tamil because, without the former, the latter beomes profane, sentimental and debased as one could well call modern 'Tamil'. Tamil, in Tradition, is the creation of Siva Himself and, through its primordial beginnings, it can well be both reasoned and justified why it was that Siva presided over the first Sangam.

Where today educationists have taker Tamilnadu along the path of Western and European disciplines — in every sense anti-traditional, academic and bourgeoisie)—the only

surviving primodial tradition found in Tamil has become for the most part sentimental and materialistic. It is the same as pointed out by Ananda Coomaraswamy in his "Nature of Folklore and Popular Art" where cultures of unanimous societies have given way to a growing distinction of literacy from illiteracy. It is a distinction "measured by standards, not of profoundity, but of literacy." When alien influences crept into Tamilnadu, instead of feeling and wisdom in education, there began to be substituted mere knowledge.

Siva's role as President of the First Tamil Sangam was to enunciate the basis of a language for man capable of transmitting a traditional doctrine - a claim which no language in the world can make. Tamil has ample ground to justify such divine origin from the very alphabet to the poetry and music. It is because of this beginning that Tamil has, down the ages, built a stupendous tradition in literature, poetry and dance whilst transmitting from generation to generation its many-dimensionnl extensions of thought and feeling. Tamil was able to set up intrinsically a tradition of profound learning handed down from master to disciple or teacher to pupil as well as parent to child until today, due to Western and other alien influences, it has well - nigh descende into the dark night of the intellect. University education as it is understood and applied today has visibly dulled and inhibited intellectual levels so much so that doctrines are no longer transmitted and it becomes of "little difference whether one dies in the trenches suddenly or in a factory day by day."

C. G. Jung in his essay on "The Holy Men of India" refers the rapid collapse of spiritual values now threatening the Eastern peoples. "The demands of the soul are being forgotten amid the novelties of Western civilization with its materialistic technology and commercial acquisitiveness,"

The sickness of the Western man is the one-sidedness of his psychic diet. Thus he suffers from himself and "he will not rest until he has infected the whole world with his own greedy restlessness."

It is necessary in this context to refer to one or two reasons why the Tamil language which holds the key to Saivism has given way to a sort of gibberish in our education systems One reason is the Western impact and neo-Western cultures that parade as scholasticism which in turn have all but ruined the all-encompassing Saiva religious, social, cultural and economic life. There is a specifically Saiva Theory of Beauty seen in dance and music—the incomparable representation of which is Siva Himself. If ever Tamil children—in the sense that Tamil itself is Saiva—have to breathe their religion and culture, it has to be through Sangam literature which laid the norms for poetry, religion and thinking away from the affectations of good and evil.

Tholkappiam, for example, gave the proper recipe: வினையின் நீங்கி விளங்கிய அறிவின் முனைவன் கண்டது முதல் நூலாகும். The Tamil people have to emerge out of the present darkness that is already incomprehending. It is no doubt the prerogative of darkness to be so. In this context what Jung says is apposite: "Everything that the darkness thinks, grasps and comprehends by itself is dark; therefore it is illuminated only by what, to it, is unexpected, unwanted and incomprehensible." †

Thiruvarutpayan 19 gives the deeper insight:

ஊமன் கண் போல ஒளியும் மிகவிருளே
வாமன் கண் காணாதவை.

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† (Chapter on 'Mysterium Coniuntionis' in "The Collected Works" Vol. II).

"Those who do not see the Greater Light are like unto the owl which sees only greater darkness as the sun's light becomes more intense".

Tamil has suffered a greater blow through the Aryanisation of outlook among scholastics both indigenous and foreign. Due to this, whilst Sanskrit itself has died, Tamil is struggling against powerful contending forces to destroy itself.

The drifting apart of languages and dialects today is due to the drifting apart of mankind. The Kural spoke the universal language of mankind which is by way of a singular example. Also Tamil as a language was intended to govern an ungovernable world because it spoke of life only as an energic process. Thus the language never lost sight of archetypal statements.

There is also the excessive emphasis on the scientific way of thinking. This has killed the aesthetic and spiritual man in giving birth to the bureaucrat and technologist. The language of the **Kural,** for example, had a universality which is different from what languages are today. It was not designed that men should be scattered abroad because they could not understand one another's speech.

It is essentially the Saiva life, meaning, thereby the Tamil, - (despite the present age of commercial and industrial destruction of the spirit of man) - which can recover the sense of eternity. And that can only happen through the Third Eye of Siva which is all that Saiva Siththantham means if the purpose of Sangam literature has been achieved in the past. The Third Eye is where time is changed into space seated as IT is between the dualities which contribute to creation and all its time-bound activities.

Tamil and Saivism were born of a synthesis of thought and realisation of the inevitability of liberation. To elevate ourselves to this state or rather to return to it, much or even all of the western—oriented practices which have invaded Saiva homes have to be discarded. A complete change in educational outlook and social upbringing is necessary for the Saivites of today to become the true worshippers of Nadarajah.

From this long but necessary introduction to proceed to the theme of this talk makes the task lighter, Having Siva's Third Eye as object, it is easier to dwell on the vagaries called 'dualities' or இருவினை. I would by way of clarification quote from the appropriate sources so that the interpretation would be lightened— sources which are altogether principial.

The Creator of all things should also create a language, because language for man is the breath of life. It is this that gives Tamil its unique and distinguishing feature. When Siva presided over the First Sangam, He started from First Prinoiples—even the contents of the letters of the alphabet became metaphysical giving a meaning over and above what is construed in other languages as of immediate value or as the necessity of life. Formulations for the letters of the alphabet were given in terms of உயிர் life. மெய் body and உயிர்மெய் the living embodiment. Here at once is brought into being a new front "out of time and space into an unconfined and timeless empyrean" The body letter conveys the substantive and existing form conditioned by time and space.

அ or "A" stands out as the life letter representing the beginning or primordial sound or நாதம். In Thiruvarutpayan, for example, the very first invoeatory couplet makes this alphabet அ all-pervasive.

அகர வுயிர் போலறிவாகி யெங்கும்
நிகரிலிறை நிற்கு நிறைந்து.

It becomes the soul of primordial sound—the source of wisdom and all—pervading. Valluvar's Kural begins with this letter also as invocatory and giving the meaning of **in principio**—that which was in the beginning—the letter itself becoming the Word.

அகர முதல எழுத்தெல்லாம் ஆதி
பகவன் முதற்றே உலகு.

The beginning is not thought of numerologically but as between the dualities, unaffected and untainted by these. In the veryconcept of the life letters called Uyir உயிர் the transformation of the man becomes a reality. An eternal law has been outlined in the very alphabets which are distinct and diverse from any human code. Valluvar gave the attributes of the Tamil man's God in the distinct non—dual relationship of the soul to Siva. The subsequent two kurals explain the concept further :

வேண்டுதல் வேண்டாமை யிலானடி சேர்ந்தார்க்கு
யாண்டும் இடும்பை யில.

இருள்சேர் இருவினையுஞ் சேரா இறைவன்
பொருள்சேர் புகழ் புரிந்தார் மாட்டு.

C.G. Jung says that "the pairs of opposites constitute the phenomenology of the paradoxical **self, man's totality.**" Again in the same Chapter on "Mysterium Coniunctionis—an inquiry into the Separation and Synthesis of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy", he says : "In the union of the opposites is revealed the **summa medicina** which heals not only the body but the spirit." Hence Siva—gnana—sithiyar refers to Siva as Maha Vaithianathan—the Greatest of Healers and Physicians. Thirumanthirm *113* gives the meaning clearly that "He took form to accord with a world

where dualities only count and His Feet firmly placed on my head dispelled all taints of duality, thus bringing forth within me rapturous joy :".

விண்ணின் றிழிந்து வினைக்கீடாய் மெய் கொண்டு
தண்ணின்ற தாளைத் தலைக்காவல் முன்வைத்து
உண்ணின் றுருக்கி யொரொப்பிலா ஆனந்தக்
கண்ணின்று காட்டிக் களிம்பறுத்தானே.

When Nietzsche said, "God is dead", he uttered a truth applicable to the West where God has been placed out in the clouds encrusted and placated with man-made images and words. On the other hand Saiva Siththantham posits Siva in the very centre of the created dualities but all the same outside them. In that stance or position He becomes the physician **par excellance**, centered as He is between the afflictions of the dualities. The principle of a healthy life is beyond all oppositions though the opposing tendencies are traceable in everything - one being either descending or ascending, centripetal or centrifugal. It is also, as Rene Guenon explains, a movement away from the principle and a return towards the principle — "two phases often compared symbolically to the movements of the heart or to the two—fold action of breathing" ("Crisis of the Modern World"). To Guenon we are "in an age at the opposite pole of spirituality" which means "a pure dispersion in multiplicity tending towards final dissolution."

How the Tamils too should have joined this band-wagon is a matter for another study, but the regrettable fact is that, with all their interest in things superficial, seen for example in the books, newspapers and magazines they read, any attempt to reverse values lies entirely in the hands of the State as it once lay incumbent on the Tamil kings of old. It was part of their kingly duties to establish the Sangams to determine the readable value of anything and Tholkappiam laid down its norms. Ananda Coomaraswamy

aptly said: "To justify the exercise of a censureship, we must know what is right or wrong, and why; we must have read Eternal Law before we can impose a human code."†

Jung gave a fair explanation of the opposites and it appears necessary to go back to him : "The factors which come together in the coniunctio are conceived as opposites eithercon- fronting one another in enmity or attracting one another in love. To begin with they form a dualism; for instance the opposites are moist and dry. cold and warm, upper and higher spirit and body, heaven and earth, fire and water, good and evil, masculine and feminine, living and dead. Often the polarity is arranged as a quarterino with the two opposites crossing one another ....The pairs of opposites constitute the phenomenology of the paradoxical **self**, man's totality. That is why their symbolism makes use of cosmic expres- sions like **coelum/terra.**' As if to explain what has been said earlier, Jung says : "In the union of the opposites is revealed the **summa medicina**, which heals not only the body but the spirit." The great Saiva mystics constantly harped on the freedom from the opposites because they realised the Centre. What this state can be has merely become a subject of study in modern psychology of which the ablest expositor has been Jung. What he says is there- fore relevant :

"The freedom from the opposites **(nirdvandva)** is a conception alien in form at least to the Christian West because it relativises the opposites and is intended to mitigate or even heal, the irreconcilable conflict in the militant Christian attitude".

Perhaps the most explicit call for liberation from the opposites comes from Arunagirinathar sung by him at

†("Is Art a Superstition?" Page 85).

Chithambaram which castigatee a world caught in the dualities. In this he also refers to Muruhan as the Great Redeemer-having succeeded Siva as President of the Second Sangham and contributing to the greater growth of Tamil. The world, he says, is lost in the bewilderment of the dualities.

இருவினையின் மதிமயங்கித் திரியாதே
எழுநரகிலுழலு நெஞ்சுற் றலையாதே
பரமகுரு அருள் நினைந்திட் டுணர்வாலே
பரவுதரி சனையை யென்றெற் கருள்வாயே
தெரிதமிழை யுதவு சங்கப் புலவோனே
சிவனருளு முருக செம்பொற் கழலோனே
கருணை நெறி புரியுமன்பர்க் கெளியோனே
கனக சபை மருவு கந்தப் பெருமாளே.

In Tamil are formulations of principles which help to break through the envelop which temporarily confines man to the short span of a physical life tied up with its dualities. Tamil music and poetry deriving from norms of the Sangam periods have the immense capacity of breaking through the sense barriers of time and space and even to hold these within grasp of the ever-present **Now** - the **nunc stans** as distinct from the **nunc fluens.** In fact the very aim of Tamil poetry has been to emphasise the redeeming principle from the pairs of opposites.

Again, how easily the Saiva mystic has been able to grasp what has taken great mental and physical effort through modern science can be seen in Manikkavasagar's view of the microcosm residing in the macrocosm. Without help of telescopes and microscopes he was able to see the universe and its cosmic arrangements in a continuous front from small to big and that in an unbroken chain of unity in purpose and intent. How few of the Tamll children can render Thivandappahuthi - even those who follow their so-called science stream at Universities?

The struggle of the soul in a world of relativity was never a dilemma for the Saivaite because it was an essential part of discipline and study right from childhood as to how to secure liberation. It is we, who, as Ananda Coomaraswamy says, have "killed the metaphysical man and shut ourselves up in the dismal cave of functioual and economic determinism."

The second sutram of Saiva-gnana-potham deals specifically with the dualities and therein brings about a vivid picture of non-dual relationship :

அவையே தானேயாய் இரு வினையிற்
போக்கு வரவு புரிய ஆணையின்
நீக்கம் இன்றி நிற்கும் அன்றே.

There is creation all the time and, but for the involvement in the dualities, the relationship of **Aran*** to the souls is non-dual. The word 'soul' here can safely be replaced by the term entity. Time and temporal factors enter into created things which are all the products of **mayai**. In births the fruits of experience are harvested which is where the Tamil life becomes so full being intertwined with the pervading concept of Siva's lordship.

While Siva dances to maintain the cosmic arrangement, there is a Centre in all the movement. Hence the life which is there in the cosmos has to keep some rhythm and purpose. Siva's own "Being is beyond the realm of purposes" no doubt. But, there is a dance of the flesh (ஊன நாடகம்) which cannot keep pace with the Dance of Gnosis (ஞான நாடகம்). This is the meaning of liberation from the circumferance where there is constant recurrence to the Centre of the Being, from the pairs of opposites to the Feet of Siva.

ஊன நடனம் ஒருபால் ஒருபாலா
ஞானநடம் தானடுவே நாடு.

Thiruvarut-payan-83

"On one side is dance of matter or the flesh; on the other the Dance of Gnosis. The Centre of the latter be thou".

The Saiva Siththanthin would explain this through the Tamil letter-formula ந-ம-சி-வா-ய of the Panchakshara called **stoola** which places Siva in the Centre of the Being.

Explaining the Dance of Siva, Ananda Coomaraswamy says : "No artist of today, however great, could more exactly or more wisely create an image of that Energy which science must postulate behind all phenomena. If we could reconcile Time with Eternity, we can scarcely do otherwise than by the conception of alternations of phase extending over vast regions of space and great tracts of time."

It is through a knowledge of the dualities that the Dravidian was able to transmit a knowledge of cosmic analogies whilst at the same time through music to find the Centre-the all-pervading **Sruthi**. The latter helped to lay the foundation for an unequalled musical system in the world in which the long tradition of seers and mystics took delight and through which they were able to find their way to self-expression.

This paper would be incomplete without some reference to the greatest saints and mystics who sang rapturously all their lives, thus handing down to posterity a vast compendium of the great poetry of any language brought in spontaneous outpourings. They are still incomparably the best in the world and our thanks on this occasion should go to our learned and wise kings of the past for preserving them for posterity.

Being the outpourings of saints and mystics rendered to music, translations into English are no easy task and will always suffer for inadequacies and distortions. Whatever may have been undertaken here bear on the dualities which I have taken up in humility and trepidation to present before you.

This talk will be incomplete wiihout some reference to some of the sources where the great mystics have sung referring pointedly to the subject of the delusion of the dualities. It was they alone who knew the need for and the secret behind the reconciliation.

(Please see Pages 183 to 186 for Continuation)

APPENDIX-2

THE BIOGRAPHY OF VALLUVAR IN TRADITION

The life history given in tradition of the mystic—poet Thiru-Valluvar is not of an ego personality. Rather what was sought to be presented was nothing but his consciousness based on an indefinitely extended unconscious psyche. In that life there was no betrayal of what was false within.

The biography brings to light the homogeneity of the human psyche—a homogeneity which may be said to extend into a world-wide identity as can be seen even in the world—wide similarities of myths and fairy—tales. The story in short goes thus :

The question was posed before Lord Siva in Kailasa by Parvathi whether on earth there had been any who had attained liberation whilst living lhe household life. The Great Lord answered that there were six—namely, Vasittar, Ahasthiyar, Ayan, Puyangan and Sambu as belonging to the world of the Devas and Valluvar alone as belonging to the earth. All these exemplified the virtues of the household life In the liberated state of **Il—aram**.

Under a meaningful as well as divinely pre—arranged sequence, the father of Valluvar happened to be a person of great learning and self—discipline belonging to the hierarchlcal order called **anthanar**. He was thus always on pilgrimage and therefore on the move. Thus one day he happened to take abode in a **Sathiram** or resting place for the renounced and, after due performance of religiou rites, he set about cooking his food. A yound maiden who, from infancy, had been adopted by a certain depressed—class family, happened to come into this **Sathiram** but was driven away by the **anthanan**. Thereafter, the **anthanan**

proceeded on his pilgrimage to Kasi and the much sought—after bath in the Ganges. Returning therefrom he took shelter once again in the **sathiram**. Once again the **maiden**, now beautiful as ever, appeared at the scene. Valluvar was persuaded by the Head of the **Sathiram** to take the maiden, Vasuhi by name, as wife and he did so mistaking her to be a woman of **anthanar** origin. The marriage took place only after the **anthanan's** or Bhagavan's pilgrimage to Rameswaram in the South.

Thereafter the story goes that Bhagavan in due course came to understand her caste origin which led to a compromise that all children born of the wedlook should be left abandoned at their respective places of birth.

The children born were seven in number and each in turn became poet or poetess even as they ripened into old age. Their names greatly revered in tradition were Auvvai, Uppai Athihaman, Uruvai, Kapilar, Valli Ammai and last, but not least, our celebrated poet Thiru—Valluvar. Each child after birth into the world urged the grief-stricken mother to take courage in the separation of mother and infant. These were in song and became part of the Dravidian musical tradition with profound, enriching and lovable meanings. These are given below for their importance and value as references :

ஔவை - Auvai

இட்டமுட னென்றலையி லின்னபடி யென்றெழுதி
விட்டசிவனுஞ் செத்து விட்டானோ - முட்டமுட்டப்
பஞ்சமே யானாலும் பாரமவ னுக்கன்னாய்
நெஞ்சமே யஞ்சாதே நீ.

உப்பை - Uppai

அத்திமுத லெறும்பீ றானவுயி ரத்தனைக்குஞ்
சித்த மகிழ்ந்தளிக்குந் தேசிகன் - முற்றவே
கற்பித்தான் போனானோ காக்கக் கடனிலையோ
வற்பனோ வன்னா யரன்.

அதிகமான் - Athikaman

கருப்பைக்குண் முட்டைக்குங் கல்லினுட்டே ரைக்கும்
விருப்புற் றமுதளிக்கு மெய்ய - னுருப்பெற்றா
லூட்டி வளர்க்கானோ வோகெடுவா யன்னாய்கேள்
வாட்ட முனக்கேன் மகிழ்.

உறுவை - Uruvai

சண்டப் பைக்குள்ளுயிர்தன் றாயருந்தத் தானருந்து
மண்டத் துயிர் பிழைப்பதாச்சரிய - மண்டி
யலைகின்ற யன்னா யரனுடைய வுண்மை
நிலை கண்டு நீயறிந்து நில்.

கபிலர் - Kapilar

கண்ணுழையாக் காட்டிற் கருங்கற் றவளைக்கு
முண்ணும் படி யறிந்தூட்டுமவர் - நண்ணு
நமக்கும் படியளப்பார் நாரியோர் பாகர்
தமக்குநீ தொழிலென்னதான்.

வள்ளியம்மை - Valli-Ammai

அன்னை வயிற்றி லருத்தி வளர்த்த வன்றா
னின்னும் வளர்க்கானோ வென்றாயே - மின்னரவஞ்
சூடும் பெருமான் சுடுகாட்டினின்று விளை
யாடும் பெருமானவன்.

திருவள்ளுவர் - Thiruvalluvar

எவ்வுயிருங் காக்கவொரு வீசனுண்டோ வில்லையோ
வவ்வுயிரில் யானொருவ னல்லனோ - வவ்வி
யருகுவது கொண்டிங் கலைகுவதே னன்னே
வருகுவது தானே வரும்.

Each one of these songs conveys a depth of meaning relevant only to Tradition where every person and every thing had his, hers or its appointed place and appointed function. We have in Plato great resemblance to this situation where he said, **"All children will be taken away from their parents at birth, and great care will be**

taken that no parsnts shall know who their children are and no children shall know who their parents are." Each of these songs has a depth of meaning intended as it was to give courage to the mother to go the way of truth because all things have a pre-ordained course.

The life of Valluvar was centred round Mylapore. He had been adopted by a childless woman of Vellala origin. Thereafter the adoption passed on to another and from thence the life was one of singular loneliness. The great Thirumoolar who gave the Tamil mystical and literary tradition its unequalled masterpiece, "**Thirumanthiram**" is said to have been visited at his abode in the hills by the poet. Thirumoolar assigned the latter the task of writing "**Thirkkural**" to give mankind the content and meaning of liberation in **aram** (அறம்), **Porul** (பொருள்) and **Inpam** (இன்பம்).

Most majestic and exemplary in the life of householder was that presented by Valluvar and his wife Vasuki, as example of the highest feminine virtue of **Pathini.** It showed how valuable and meaningful the married state could be if only it would conform to the norms of **aram.** In Vasuki there was no calculating assertion of rights and therefore nothing of the selfish which characterises modern homes.

Valluvar took as vocaiton the work of weaver for which he was provided the necessary yarn by the merchant and sea-farer named Ehlezla-singan. The latter in time became a disciple of Valluvar as exemplified in the story of a famine that overtook the region. Ehlezla-singan, being a merchant and sea-farer, was naturally stocked with a large quantity of rice. The people therefore beseiged him to sell them their needed rice. In turn the merchant turned to his master and guru, Valluvar, for advice as to how he was to dispose of his stock of grain. Straightaway the advice

went that the sale should be at cost price (கொள்முதல்). This was done and the merchant-disciple was saddled with bags full of money. He once again sought the master's advice and was promptly told that the money did not belong to him. The advice went that the money should be converted into gold and thrown into the sea.

After sometime the gold was accidentally recovered by some deep-sea fishermen. When the latter found that the gold belonged to the sea-faring merchant from the name engraved therein, they returned it to the lawful owner. Once again Enlezla-singan sought the advice of his guru and mentor and was promptly told that, since the gold had come back on its own, it was his by rightful ownership.

Valluvar's wife was embodiment of all the virtues that belonged to the household state. There are many striking and moving anecdotes about her which demonstrate how she meticulously carried out all the duties that Valluvar found exalted in the household state. As instance of one, it was Valluvars, requent that a tumbler of water and needle should be placed before him during meal- time. This Vasuhi carried out unquestioningly till the time arrived for her death. Valluvar, deeply moved, asked her what request she had to make of him. It was only then she found the need to ask of him the first question of her life :

Question : "Lord, I have been always been puzzled why you had wanted a tumbler of water to be placed by me before you at time of eating. Please clear this doubt for me."

Valluvar : "I wanted the needle so that I could use it to pick up any rice that accidentally might fall off the plantaian leaf when you were serving me my meals. The tumbler of water was to enable me to wash the rice so picked and to put it back on my leaf. You are indeed the noblest among those who perform household duties

because, in the act of serving me rice, you never dropped on the floor a single grain."

Even as Vasugi breathed her last, Valluvar sang the following most moving tribute to her as the ideal of Tamil womanhood ;

அடிசிற் கினியாளே யன்புடையாளே
படி சொற்றவறாத பாவா—யடிவருடிப்
பின்றூங் கிமுன்னெழூ உம் பேதையே போதியோ
வென்றூங்கு மென் கணிரா.

In this was acknowledgement of the perfectitude implied in the life of householder—that of identity than equality. In that was a spititnal freedom justifying no cult of ego expression because in the fulfilment of function there could not have been any statement of rights.

THE END

This talk will be incomplete without reference to some of the sources where the great mystics have sung referring pointedly to the subject of the delusion of the dualities. It was they alone who knew the need for and the secret behind the reconciliation.

It was not possible to collect all the manifold instances, but what is appended here will suffice to clear the mind on this most important subject which goes to the root of Saivism. It was T.S. Eliot who got nearer to the subject when he said:

> "At the still point of turning world ....
> There the Dance is".

திருவாசகம் : "பொல்லா வினையேன்"

"வினைப் பிறவி சாராமே" ... சிவபுராணம்

"இருவினை மாமரம் வேர்
பறித்தெழுந்து" ... திருவண்டப் பகுதி

வல்வினைப் பட்டாழ்கின்றாய் ... திருச்சதகம்

வினையிலே கிடந்தேனைப்
புகுந்து நின்று போது நான்
வினைக்கேடன் என்பாய் போல

இரண்டுமிலித் தனியனேற்கே ... திருச்சதகம்

வினையைப் பொடியாக்கி

வினையேன் அழுதால்
உன்னைப் பெறலாமே

வினையின் தொகுதி ஒறுத்தெனை
யாண்டுகொள்.

விணைத் துணையேனை விடுதி ... நீத்தல்
கண்டாய் விண்ணப்பம்
வினையேனுடைய மனத்து
ணையே

என் வல்வினையின் வாயிற்
பொடியட்டி ... திருப்பூ
வல்லி

விழுங்குகின்றேன் விக்கினேன்
வினையேன் ... அடைக்கலப்
பத்து

வினைப் பிறவி என்கின்ற
வேதனையில் அகப்பட்டு

வினைமல மறுத்து ... கண்ட
பத்து

குழைத்தாற் பண்டைக் கொடு
வினைநோய் காவாய்
உடையாய் கொடுவினையேன் ... குழைத்து
பத்து

என்புள்ளுருக்கி இருவினையை
ஈடழித்து ... குலாப்
பத்து

வெய்ய வினையிரண்டும் வெந்தகல
மெய்யுருகி ... திருவெண்பா

முன்னை வினையிரண்டும் வேரறுத்து முன்னிற்றான்
பின்னைப் பிறப்பறுக்கும் பேராளன் ... திருவெண்பா

முத்தி நெறி யறியாத மூர்க்க ரொரு முயல்வேனைப்
பத்தி நெறியறிவித்துப் பழவினைகள் பாறும் வண்ணம்

வெந்துவிழும் உடற்பிறவி மெய் என்று வினைபெருக்கி
அச்சோப்பதிகம்

குழைத்த பத்து

1. குழைத்தாற் பண்டைக் கொடுவினைநோய் காவாய்
உடையாய் கொடுவினை யேன்.

கண்ட பத்து

2. வினைப் பிறவி என்கின்ற வேதனையில் அகப்பட்டுத்
தனைச் சிறிதும் நினையாதே தளர்
வெய்திக் கிடப்பேனை
எனைப் பெரிதும் ஆட் கொண்டென்
பிறப்பறுத்த இணையிலியை
அனைத்து லகுந் தொழுந்தில்லை அம்ப
லத்தே கண்டேனே.

திருக்கழுக்குன்றப் பதிகம்

பிணக்கிலாத பெருந்துறைப் பெரு
மான் உன் நாமங்கள் பேசுவார்க்
கிணக்கிலாத தோர் இன்பமே வரும்
துன்பமே துடைத் தெம்பிரான்
உணக்கிலாத தோர் வித்து மேல்வினை
யாமல் என் வினை ஒத்த பின்
கணக்கிலாத் திருக் கோலம் நீவந்து
காட்டினாய் கழுக்குன்றிலே.

சிவ புராணம்

பொல்லா வினையேன் புகழுமா றொன்றறியேன்
. . . .
மீட்டிங்கு வந்து வினைப் பிறவி சாராமே

திருவண்டப்பகுதி

இருவினை மாமரம் வேர் பறித் தெழுந்து
. . . .

திருச்சதகம்

1. வாழ்கின்றாய் வாழாத நெஞ்சமே
வல்வினைப்பட்
டாழ்கின்றுய் ஆழாமற் காப்பானை ஏத்தாதே

2. வினையிலே கிடந்தேனைப் புகுந்து நின்று
போது நான் வினைக் கேடன் என்பாய் போல
இனையன் நான் என்றுன்னை அறிவித் தென்னை
ஆட்கொண்டெம் பிரானுனாய்.
சிந்தனை நின்றனக்காக்கி நாயி னேன்றன்
கண்ணிணை நின் திருப் பாதப் போதுக் காக்கி
. . . . உன்னைத்
தந்தனை . . . .
தனிச்சுடரே இரண்டுமிலித் தனிய னேற்கே.

a) வினையைப் பொடியாக்கித்

b) ஆனால் வினையேன் அழுதான் உன்னைப் பெறலாமே

c) வம்பனேன் வினைக் கிறுதி யில்லையே.

நீத்தல் விண்ணப்பம்

தனித் துணை நீ நிற்க . . . .
. . . .
வினைத் துணை யேனை விடுதிகண்
டாய் வினையேனுடைய
மனத்துணையே . . . . .

திருவம்மானை

தன் கருணை
வெள்ளத் தழுத்தி வினை கடிந்த
வேதியனைத்

திருப்பூவல்லி

என் வல்வினையின்
வாயிற் பொடியட்டிப் பூவல்லி
கொய்யாமோ.

திருநாவுக்கரசர்

திருவே என் செல்வமே . . . . . .
அருவாய வல்வினை நோய் அடையா வண்ணம்

சம்பந்தர் தேவாரம்

திருப்பிரமபுரம்

அருநெறிய மறை . . . . . .
திருநெறிய தமிழ் வல்லவர் தொல்
வினை தீர்த்தல் எளிதாமே.

INDEX

ERRATA - பிழைத் திருத்தம்

பக்கம்	வரி	பிழை	திருத்தம்
5	22	தாழ்த	தாழ்ந்த
14	15	பஃறுனி	பஃறுளி
25	4	தனிதலு	தணிதலு
25	9	திரவ்கு	திரங்கு
25	12	மகாவின்	மாகவின்
25	18	பெரியரோரை	பெரியோரை
32	25	மாத்திரயாகிய	மாத்திரையாகிய
47	செய்யுள் - துப்பார்க்குத் துப்பாய துப்பாக்கித் துப்பார்க்குத் துப்பாய தூஉம் மழை		
68	10	கிடைக்கப்	கிடக்கப்
77	18	சிலிகை	சிவிகை
91	21	யாருக்கும்	யார்க்கும்
104	2	தின்மை	திண்மை
106	16	தற்கொண்டாற்	தற்கொண்டாற்
124	11	ஐந்தினை	ஐந்திணை
138	29	பண்பி	பன்பி
138	7	வேளான்மை	வேளாண்மை
142	1	வருவிருற்து	வரு விருந்து

ERRATA

Page	Line	Error	to read as
4	6	upwords	upwards
5	26	tnat	that
6	14	concious	conscious
7	9	perhap	perhaps
9	11	redical	radical
10	24	at and	and
11	27	the former calls forthe nightmare of hostile coalitions in	the former calls it the nightmare of hostile coalitions
12	24	sickness cure all the time	sickness needing cure all the time
13	14	millenia	millennia
13	20	In tee later are perhaps aveilable	In the latter are perhaps available
14	7 (last para)	play of the play of the opposites	play of the opposites
15	21	as under	asunder
15	32	Man's	man's
24	7	poposites	opposites
41	22	keeps going	keeps on going
54	1	Valinvar	Valluvar
	20	indivipual	individual
	29	Valliuvar	Valluvar
85	10	are to-day products	are today - products
85	17	home were	homes were
88	3	housholder	householder

90	10	Eevery	Every
	15	a utility	utility
92	25	become is unproductive	becomes unproductive
93	1	large	larger
94	20	indentified	identified
95	26	wa sprincipial	was principal
96	3	beneditory	hereditary
	18	iberation	liberation
146	27	renowned	removed
148	8	grues	guest

உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சி நிறுவன வெளியீடுகள்

1.	தமிழில் விடுகதைகள்	...	ரூ.	12-00
2.	உலகத் தமிழ் எழுத்தாளர் யார் ? எவர் ?	...	ரூ.	6-00
3.	தமிழர் தோற்கருவிகள்	...	ரூ.	10-00
4.	தமிழும் தமிழரும்	...	ரூ.	5-00
5.	தமிழர் இசை	...	ரூ.	70-00
6.	ம.பொ.சி.யின் இலக்கியநூல்கள்-ஓர்மதிப்பீடு	...	ரூ.	20-00
7.	இளங்கோவின் இலக்கிய உத்திகள்	...	ரூ.	12-00
8.	திராவிட மொழி இலக்கியங்கள்	...	ரூ.	35-00
9.	உ. வே. சா. இலக்கணப் பதிப்புகள்	...	ரூ.	12-00
10.	தமிழ் இலக்கியக் கொள்கை-9	...	ரூ.	20-00
11.	தொல்காப்பியம் புணரியல்	...	ரூ.	10-20
12.	தொல்காப்பியம் வெற்றுமை மயங்கியல்	...	ரூ.	12-00
13.	தொல்காப்பியம் - விளிமரபு	...	ரூ.	6-00
14.	தொல்காப்பியம் - பெயரியல்	...	ரூ.	12-00
15.	தொல்காப்பியம் - வினையியல்	...	ரூ.	20-00
16.	பிரபந்த தீபிகை	...	ரூ.	12-00
17.	கண் மருத்துவம்	...	ரூ.	50-00
18.	வர்ம சூத்திரம்	...	ரூ.	10-00
19.	தன்வந்திரி குழந்தை வாகடம்	...	ரூ.	14-00
20.	வெள்ளைக்காரன் கதை	...	ரூ.	7-00
21.	மெய்க்கீர்த்திகள்	...	ரூ.	20-00
22.	சிந்து இலக்கியம்	...	ரூ.	8-00
23.	தமிழ்ச் சுவடிகள் அட்டவணை	...	ரூ.	6-00
24.	தஞ்சை மாவட்ட ஊர்ப்பெயர்கள்	...	ரூ.	12-00
25.	இலக்கியத்தில் ஊர்ப்பெயர்கள்-1	...	ரூ.	12-00
26.	இலக்கியத்தில் ஊர்ப்பெயர்கள் -2	...	ரூ.	22-00
27.	இஸ்லாம் வளர்த்த தமிழ்	...	ரூ.	15-00
28.	உ. வே. சா. சங்க இலக்கியப் பதிப்புகள்	...	ரூ.	10-00
29.	டாக்டர் உ. வே. சா. காப்பியப்பதிப்புகள்	...	ரூ.	10-00
30.	தமிழரின் தாயகம்	...	ரூ.	10-00
31.	பாவாணரும் தனித்தமிழும்	...	ரூ.	12-00
32.	தேவநேயப் பாவாணரின் சொல்லாய்வு	...	ரூ.	10-00
33.	செங்கை மாவட்ட ஊர்ப் பெயர்கள்	...	ரூ.	25-00
34.	மொழி பெயர்ப்பியல்	...	ரூ.	10-00
35.	தமிழர் திருமணம்	...	ரூ.	25-00
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